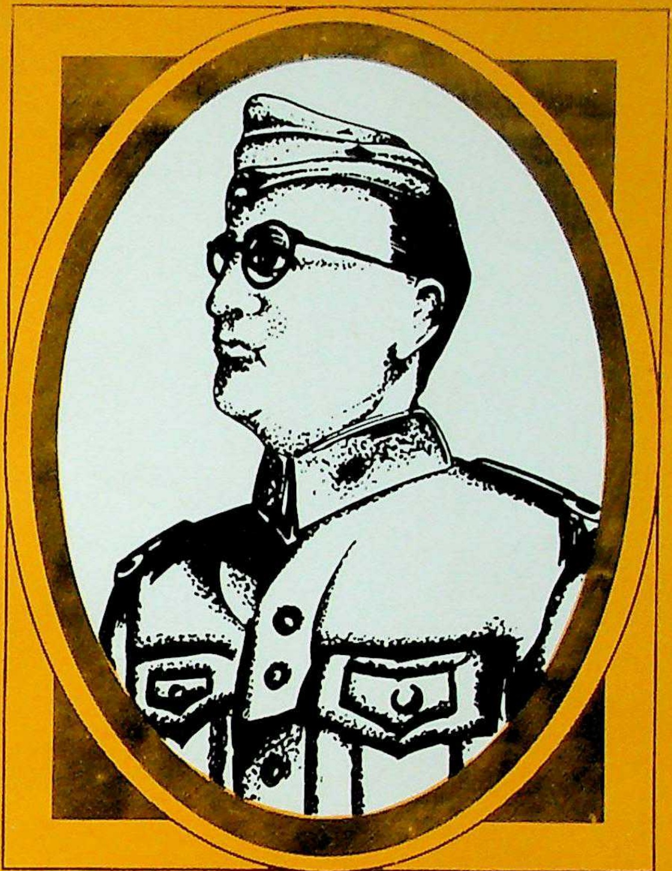

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

ACCELERATOR OF INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE

DAYA MUKHERJEE

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was a freedom fighter with a difference. He was a radical, a revolutionary and, above all, a missionary, whose only mission in life was to secure India's freedom, for which he lived and died. The means he applied raised conventional eyebrows—they were certainly unorthodox—and his forthright opinions and clash of views with Mahatma Gandhi ultimately led to his alienation from the Congress mainstream, which found his approach a little too militant.

Unfazed, even though he was sidelined and expelled from the Congress, Bose continued his struggle from abroad, trying to harness the military powers of that time—Germany and Japan—to fight against British imperialism. Single-handedly, he carried on the propaganda for India's independence across Europe and later in South-East Asia, exposing to the world the true state of affairs in his enslaved motherland.

A little-conceded fact is that it was ultimately Bose and his INA who put the final pressure on the British Government to hasten the transfer of power, by sparking off the Naval Mutiny which convinced the British like nothing else could that the days of the Raj were well and truly over.

This book endeavours to portray and highlight Subhas Chandra Bose in the light of this single most important contribution of his to the national freedom struggle.

Rs. 595

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SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

"In the name of God, I take this sacred oath that to liberate India and the thirty-eight crores of my countrymen, I, Subhas Chandra Bose, will continue this sacred war of freedom till the last breath of my life.

I shall always remain a servant of India and look after the welfare of thirty-eight crores of Indian brothers and sisters.This shall be for me my highest duty.

Even after winning freedom I will always be prepared to shed the last drop of my blood for the preservation of India's freedom."

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE:
Accelerator of India's Independence

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Vice-President of the All India Forward Bloc

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Dedicated to
Netaji
who Fought for
Strong and United
India

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Foreword

The memory of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at once conjures up the image of a historical personality, who was active and energetic, had extraordinary organisational capacity, and one who could dare all kinds of perils.

Netaji's greatest quality was that he was extremely conscious and bound to time. That is to say, he never took anybody into confidence about his plans. Sometimes he revealed his plan only to his best confidants, and that too after its 70 per cent completion. Not only that, if he confided in a person about a certain plan, he never let even a hint of it get to another.

Even as early as the last days of 1938, Netaji had perceived that the Second World War was going to break out soon. He even set a time limit of six months for it to commence in his presidential address at the Tripuri session of the Congress. He also realized that without an armed conflict the country could not be freed from the bondage of the British. Therefore, he started out not just on his plan of going out of the country, but also on setting simultaneously into motion three other schemes.

The first of these projects was to go to China and start an armed struggle from there. No one but him was aware of this plan. He wrote a letter to the then President of China, General Chiang Kai-Shek and asked for political asylum so that he could work from there towards winning India's freedom. But on the grounds of its compulsion with the Allies, Chiang Kai Shek expressed his inability to agree with Netaji. Thus, Netaji set aside his China plan. (This correspondence of his is preserved in the archives of the Chinese Government.)

Netaji's second plan was to go to Japan, as there Mr. Rashbehari

Bose, who had thrown a bomb at the Viceroy of India in Delhi, was already living with his family. He sent the then famous businessman of Delhi Lala Shankarlal, to Japan without a passport with a view to making the necessary arrangements. This plan of Netaji was known in his family only to Mr. Dwijendra Nath Bose. Netaji's elder brother, Mr. Sarat Chandra learnt of it only when Lala Shankarlal was arrested as soon as he arrived in Bombay and was sent to Lahore. Netaji realized that this plan could not be carried forward and, therefore, abandoned it.

Netaji made the last plan to go to Russia. The Second World War had broken out. Mr. Abdul Shah, a member of the Central Committee of the All India Forward Bloc from the Frontier Province, had been working on this plan. The plan was to cross over from India into Kabul. The whole path was full of rugged hills. Netaji had already been put under arrest in July 1940 for his 'Remove Black Hole' agitation. Only Mr Sarat Chandra and Mr Dwijendra Nath Bose were in the know of this plan in the family.

While in jail Netaji started his fast unto death. Released from jail, he was kept under strict vigil at home. Nonetheless, Netaji succeeded in reaching Kabul under the guise of Maulana Ziauddin. From there he reached Berlin via Moscow, where he consulted General Molotov. How the plan was kept a well-guarded secret is evident from the fact that the countrymen came to know of Subhas Babu's disappearance on 26 January, 1941 when he had already reached Kabul.

From Berlin he set out on an extremely hazardous journey of 90 days by a submarine, and reached Japan.

Netaji initiated the direction of an armed struggle. An army of over three lakhs, composed of Indian migrants to Singapore, Malaya, Java, Sumatra, Burma, etc., was organised. These men were inspired by the sentiment of sacrificing their all for the great cause.

"Listen! Listen! Listen Carefully! On the other side of these mountains lies our motherland, shackled by the fetters of slavery, and calling out to all of us to free her." "March Forward", "Chalo Delhi"—the call was given by none other than Subhas Chandra Bose, who, despite being the leader of the forces turned himself into an ordinary soldier, carrying the same load as the others, marching with a 17-mile long column. How could the sight fail to arouse in soldiers remarkable courage and an overwhelming longing for freedom? Their determination to lay down their lives rather than show a retreating back was obvious from the fact that when they were suddenly confronted with a terrible flood in the Brahmaputra river and because of it with the impossibility of getting food supplies and reinforcements, they lived on bread made from grass and still worsted the British and hoisted the flag of victory at Moirang.

There can be no two opinions that Netaji's concerted efforts brought India to the threshold of freedom. The reverend Bapu, despite being a preacher of ahimsa, had at last to pronounce that Subhas Babu was a great patriot among patriots. Sardar Patel also had to acknowledge that what the Indian National Congress could not achieve in its 60 years of struggle, Subhas Babu and his Azad Hind Fauj accomplished within a few months. He also admitted that it was only due to Netaji that the soldiers of the Indian Army were fired with the zeal of patriotism and a revolutionary spirit, which ultimately hastened the departure of the British from India.

However, even after 56 years of his disappearance in January 1941, the Indian psyche is filled with an inexhaustible trust and reverence for this great and unparalleled freedom fighter.

Netaji was flying from Bangkok to the Darien airport of Manchuria when his plane crashed. Many and varied stories about him are in circulation even today. But, it will be termed as unfortunate that Pandit Nehru's government did not give the honour and recognition due to both Netaji's achievements and personality. Only in 1956 was constituted the Shah Nawaz Khan Committee, after 9 years of persistent pressure. It is also noteworthy that the Report of Dissent of Netaji's brother, Suresh Bose, was not annexed to the Report of the Committee. Thereafter, the Khosla Commission and its findings were set up in 1970.

The then Prime Minister Morarji Desai expressed inability to accept either report in the Indian Parliament on 3 September, 1978. He said, "In the light of the doubts and mutual contradictions and on the basis of the existing records, it is difficult for the Government to accept their findings as conclusive."

Even after this the pattern of neglect of Netaji's performance and personality continued unaltered. This is exemplified by:

1. Non-recognition of and not giving the designation of 'Shaheed' and 'Swarajya' Islands to Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

2. Not requisitioning and even not putting up testimonial plates on those protected buildings which had been the headquarters of the temporary Azad Hind government and the Azad Hind Fauj in Bangkok, Malaya, Java, Sumatra, Singapore and Rangoon.
3. Not requisitioning the building in Kabul where Netaji stayed for 45 days, and which the Afghanistan government has kept protected even after the construction of a road alongside it.
4. Not making arrangements for the restoration or maintenance of the memorial erected in Singapore to commemorate the memory of the martyrs of the Azad Hind Fauj.

This year marks Netaji's birth centenary. Yes, this year Netaji's marching song, *Kadam Kadam Bhadaya Ja* has been accepted. If the government of India accepts the above mentioned demands then it will be a true tribute to Netaji.

Mrs. Daya Mukherjee has described all these events in her book, *Subhas Chandra Bose: Accelerator of India's Independence*. The attempt to write such a book is indeed commendable and also encouraging in terms of the information given. Surely, it is a welcome opportunity for me to be asked to write its Foreword.

The writer of these lines had the good fortune of being associated with Netaji's activities since the Tripuri session of the Congress. It was also my good luck to have got the opportunity to participate in his countrywide tours and programmes, especially those in Bombay, Calcutta, etc. Once I got the opportunity, accompanied by the late Pandit Sheelbhadra Yaji to work my way surrepti-tiously into the hills of Arakan in Burma and hear Netaji's message.

Heaving joined the All India Forward Bloc in 1939, I continue to be a member of it, and have completed eight decades of my life.

I wish that the government of India should respect the sentiments of the people for Netaji and work accordingly. In the 50th year of the country's independence, it should admit its failures and lift the curtain on Netaji's personality and achievements.

Jai Hind! Jai Subhas!

66, North Avenue
New Delhi-110001
23 January, 1997

Dev Dutt Shastri
Vice-President
All India Forward Bloc

Preface

The history of India's struggle for independence cannot be complete without a reference to the contribution of Subhas Chandra Bose or 'Netaji' as he was more affectionately called. Though he struck out on his own, guided by his own philosophy and ideals, he nevertheless shared the same burning love for his country as did those following a more conventional approach.

Netaji was greatly influenced by Swami Vivekananda. With Swamiji's words ringing in his ears, he saw a vision of a new India which was free, happy and based on a synthesis of all that was necessary for India.

Subhas Chandra Bose's life has been a long dramatic saga, right upto his death. In the pursuit of his goal, to which he devoted himself with a missionary zeal, he straddled both the East and the West and drew from them the essence of their best and applied it to the great struggle going on in his own enslaved country.

History has often been unfair to her heroes, leaving man to decide the difference between posterity and oblivion. Netaji has very often been dismissed as a 'hot-headed idealist', a man who was in a hurry to win freedom for his country. Maybe, now in retrospect it is easier to take an aerial view of the whole national movement. But, in those years, when every Indian was singed by the scorching contempt of the British, freedom could not have seemed something to be achieved at a leisurely pace.

The present work is an endeavour to highlight the most vital aspect of Subhas Chandra Bose's contribution to the Indian freedom struggle. The nationalistic fervour which he awakened among Indians in South-East Asia, his powerful radio broadcasts to the people of India and his dynamic INA, slowly but surely made those reeling under the horrors of imperialism seem as though the dawn of freedom would follow after a long night of slavery. This book credits Netaji with being the accelerator of India's independence. His earnest and urgent methods, his fiery forthrightness not only added piquancy and drama to the freedom movement but also speeded up the actual transfer of power.

According to the Encyclopaedia Bharatam Series: Volume One - The A's of India, by Lt.Col. O.N. Karir (Retd.), "Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army, which fought along side the Japanese army for the invasion of British India during World War II, accelerated the Independence of India, as freely admitted in 1956 by Clement Attlee who had been Prime Minister of Great Britain in 1947". This view has also been endorsed by many foreign observers that Bose hastened the end of British rule in India.

Although it is a well known fact that it was Bose who first addressed Mahatma Gandhi as 'Father of the Nation', not many are aware that it was also this revolutionary leader who coined the phrase which later grew into a deafening chorus: 'Quit India'. The Encyclopaedia Bharatam. Vol Two—The B's of India, quotes the following; "Bose said, 'If I give a call to the country, maybe 20 lakhs will respond. But if I can make the old man utter two small words—Quit India, the response will be 20 crores. There will be a political earthquake sufficient to destroy the British Raj."

- It is enviable that material for a book of this kind gets drawn from a number of sources. This is the perfect opportunity to thank the authors and publishers of all those various works which were consulted from time to time in this endeavour. Since a large number of works already exist on Netaji, it is inescapable that some of the vital facts and memorable instances find mention in more than one book on this fiery Indian patriot.

It has been a pleasure editing this book, and one hopes that it has done justice to one of the most revolutionary of Indian leaders.

I am also grateful to the chief executive of Gyan Publishing House.

DAYA MUKHERJEE

1

Making of a Great Revolutionary

There was little doubt that Netaji was a born rebel and revolutionary. When he was born in the Cuttack home of Janakinath and Prabhabati Bose on 23 January 1897, his parents little dreamt that this sixth son and ninth child of theirs was destined to leave an enduring mark on the history of modern India. Nor did it take the parents time to realize that this particular son, Subhas Chandra, was very different from his other siblings and from the children of his age.

Belonged to a Royal Family

Netaji's family history went back for some 27 generations to Dasaratha Bose who founded the Dakshi-Rarhi (South Bengal) clan of the Boses at Mahinagar, 14 miles to the south of Calcutta. Netaji's paternal lineage was impressive—Mahipati, Finance and War Minister to the then King of Bengal, and Gopinath, Finance Minister and Naval Commander to a later king of Bengal were among Netaji's ancestors. Netaji's paternal grandfather, Haranath, had four sons, Jadunath, Kedarnath, Devendranath and Janakinath, Netaji's father.

Netaji's mother, Prabhabati, belonged to the family of Dutts of Hathkola, a northern quarter of Calcutta. In the early days of British rule the Dutts had achieved eminence due to their wealth and their ability to adapt themselves to the new political order. Prabhabati's father, Ganganarayan Dutt, and grandfather had a reputation for wise selection of their sons-in-law and made alliances with the leading aristocratic families of Calcutta.

Though Subhas Bose's father migrated to Cuttack in Orissa, the family ties with Calcutta remained as strong as ever and, though living and working in Cuttack, they did not lose touch with Bengali society of the period which was in manners of living and habits of eating and dressing, was also becoming very different from the people of the rest of the country. The western influence was at its strongest, and there was unashamed imitation of English habits and customs. The mother of Subhas Bose, who managed a family of eleven, until her death typified the essence of Indian womanhood, as she silently helped her husband not only in his profession but also in raising the children without in any way opposing the method of new teaching which the children received in Public and Government Schools. It was Subhas's mother who initiated him to that fiercely burning love of country which consumed him later in life, not by resisting the type of English education he was receiving but by making him aware of the great and hoary traditions of India. Subhas had a tremendous respect for his mother and even when in the middle of bitter political struggle, whether in India, or abroad, he never forgot for a moment, her teachings and her wisdom.

Because Subhas respected his mother and loved his family, he was different from many other Indians of this period who, caught up in their political or social activities, drifted away from their family moorings because their sudden new way of thinking and living made them strangers to their family traditions and habits. But the Boses were a united family. Like many parents of that period, the father of Subhas had great faith in English education alone and he, therefore, sent his sons to the missionary school and college. Subhas, therefore, from his early childhood was caught between two very different cultures—one Indian and the other western

At the age of five Subhas went to a missionary school ("Protestant European School" run by the Baptist Mission) in 1902 at Cuttack. Although he fared very well in his seven years of study he did not take part in sports or games which formed an important part of the curriculum in a school run on European lines. Slowly, Subhas became aware of the two different worlds, in his school, one represented by his family and society which was India, and the other represented by the school atmosphere which was English. Indian boys in the school were not allowed to sit for certain scholarship examinations, though in their annual examinations they topped the class. Anglo-Indian boys could join the Volunteer Corps but Indian boys were debarred. He began to feel inferior. Things changed from the day he began going to an Indian school the Ravenshaw Collegiate School where the Indian way of life and culture prevailed. It was here that he met his first great influence in his life—his headmaster, Mr. Beni Madhav Das (an ardent disciple of Keshab Chandra Sen), who made a very deep impression on the mind of Subhas with his idealism, principles and human values. Bose says in his autobiography, "My headmaster had roused my aesthetic and moral sense—had given a new impetus to my life".[1] Neglect of sports and games was no stigma in the Indian school. Subhas was traumatised when his idol, headmaster Mr. Beni Madhav Das, was suddenly transferred from the school.

The battle within was continuing and he could not decide for himself his goal in life. He became rebellious towards his parents. Studies lost interest for him and solitude and long debates with like-minded boys became regular feature.

Impact of Vivekananda

Vivekananda entered the life of Subhas when he was barely fifteen, i.e., in 1911. It was Vivekananda who gave him a principle that he could cling to. When he was not in a position to decide his way the works of the Swamiji—the saffron-dressed Hindu monk of India became his lifeline. Young and highly sensitive Subhas "was thrilled to the marrow" when he in his own words "devoured" the books of Swami Vivekananda. Vivekananda, the neo-Vedantist Hindu monk, gave a new interpretation to the ancient scriptures of India. To him service to mankind was the service to God. *Atmano Mokshartham Jagaddhitayacha*—for one's own salvation and the welfare of humanity—formed the core of Vivekananda's teachings. In other words, social services mitigating the sufferings of humanity was the road to salvation or spiritual development according to Vivekananda.

Subhas lost himself in the works of Vivekananda, which became his beacon light. Subhas says in his autobiography: "Many of the questions which vaguely stirred my mind, and of which I was to become conscious later on, found in him a satisfactory solution". From the two saints of modern ages, i.e., Ramakrishna and Vivekananda young Subhas learnt that selfless services to the suffering humanity was a means to spiritual development.

It was Vivekananda who roused the fervour of patriotism in Subhas. Sister Nivedita, one of the disciples of Swamiji's says, "Throughout those years in which I saw him almost daily, the thought of India was to him like the air he breathed. True, he was a worker at foundations. He neither used the word 'nationality', nor proclaimed an era of 'nation-making'. 'Man-making', he said, was his own task. But he was born a lover, and the queen of his adoration was his Motherland".[2]

Vivekananda deeply influenced the revolutionary movement, particularly of Bengal, Vivekananda said after his return from the West for the second time, "What India needs today is a bomb".[3] The speeches, writings and teachings of Vivekananda became a perennial source of inspiration to the revolutionaries of Bengal.

So great was the influence of Vivekananda that his speeches and writings were read by every revolutionary nationalist of Bengal. Every revolutionary used to preserve *Jnanayoga* or *Hathayoga* or any other book of Swamiji during the days of Charles Tegart in Bengal.

Protest or revolt against injustice (especially if it hampered human freedom), was the first lesson which was learnt by Subhas from Vivekananda. "When I took to religion and Yoga seriously and wanted freedom to go where I liked and meet whomsoever I wished, I frequently came up against parental instructions. But I had no hesitation in disobeying them because by that time I believed, under the inspiration of Vivekananda, that revolt is necessary for self-fulfilment that when a child is born, its very cry is a revolt against the bondage in which it finds itself."[4]

In 1913, when he was only 15, he passed the Matriculation Examination coming out second in the whole university. Soon he was sent to Calcutta for pursuing higher studies in the Presidency College. When he came to Calcutta, Aurobindo was a 'legendary figure', and young Subhas was greatly influenced by his patriotic action, sacrifice for motherland and 'deeper philosophy'. Aurobindo's political speeches cast a powerful spell in those days on his family circles and one such speech had an indeliable influence on Subhas' mind.

In the same year, Bose had developed a sudden passion for yoga and yogis and hence Aurobindo's philosophy had tremendous appeal for him. However, very soon this love and admiration for the ascetics faded out. Subhas travelled for two months in the holy places of India in the midst of yogis and sanyasis in 1914 but became thoroughly disillusioned about them. After 1914 the pull of Aurobindo's philosophy was gone though Aurobindo lived in his memory as a symbol of burning patriotism, exemplary sacrifice and revolution. In his presidential address delivered at the Hooghly District Students' Conference on the 21st July 1929, Subhas says, "The following words of Aurobindo that he had once said in one of the open lawns of Calcutta still ring in my ears: 'I should like to see some of you becoming great: great, not for your own sake, but to make India great—so that she may stand up with head erect among the free nations of the world'.[5]

Studying in an English school first and later in an Indian school, coupled with the inter-provincial contacts and friendships, even while at school, contributed to widen his horizon.

His serious pursuit of yoga and emulating the life of a hermit, made him clash his parents. He openly rebelled against them convinced, under the inspiration of Vivekananda, that revolt was necessary for self-fulfilment. Fed-up with their eccentric son, his parents thought that a change of environment might do him good and that Calcutta would shake him out of his eccentricities and help him lead a normal life.

At the age of 16, Subhas had his first taste of community work. Now and then he heard about the Indian National Congress from his elder brothers, but it did not have any effect on him. Politics was taboo in his house.

By the time he left school he had made up his mind about certain things—he would not follow the beaten track but would lead a life helpful to his spiritual growth and the overall upliftment of humanity. Subhas wanted to pursue a meaningful life and was convince that self-discipline was the way. This helped him in his later struggles. The joy of Subhas' parents was short-lived. In Cuttack, Subhas had only a small group of like-minded schoolboys, in Calcutta he found hordes of them.

Though the college, Presidency College, was a Government institution, the students were Free Thinkers and the British rulers' secret police often zeroed in on them. The main hostel of the college was considered as the watering hole of revolutionaries. It was raided by the police. Subhas and his friends called themselves, the Neo-Vivekananda group and tried to create harmony between religion and nationalism. Nationalism was an inevitable subject. Vivekananda had emphasised social service through national reconstruction mainly in the educational sphere. Even weekends and holidays were not spent at home, but, in search of such men who could become spiritual guides.

Subhas' group was against terroristic activity and secret conspiracy. Thus, it was not so popular among students because in those days the atmosphere of the terrorist revolutionary movement in Bengal was the order of the day.

In spite of his flowery speeches Surendranath Banerjee, a hero of Bengal and one of the founders of the Indian National Congress, failed to impress Subhas in comparison to Aurobindo's simple words.

Politics had, as yet, not attracted Subhas and he was more interested in meeting religious teachers and doing social service. Subhas started working for a society that gave aid to the poor by collecting money and food every Sunday by door-to-door begging. He joined the student volunteers who did this begging. For Subhas it was nothing less than an ordeal on the first day, to go begging for rice sack in hand and he tried hard to fight his shame and humiliation.

At college, Subhas was indifferent to his studies and he found the professors quite uninteresting. But professors like Sir P. C. Ray, the eminent chemist and philanthropist inspired him greatly. Subhas busied himself in various activities of the student community, organising debates, collecting funds for flood and famine relief, representing the students before the authorities and going out on excursions with fellow-students. Involved in such activities, he gradually overcame his introversion. Once while vacationing with his parents at Cuttack, he joined some of his old friends on a nursing expedition to a place some miles away where cholera was raging. The group hardly took any precautions for themselves and boldly nursed the stricken villagers.

Back again in Calcutta after the break, Subhas was as restless as before for sadhus and one day met an ascetic, some 60 miles from Calcutta. Subhas was greatly impressed by him! He was more determined than before to find a guru and in the summer vacation of 1914, when he was barely 17, he left on a pilgrimage with a friend without informing anybody at home. He visited such well-known places of pilgrimage as Rishikesh, Hardwar, Mathura, Vrindaban, Varanasi and Gaya.

Although Bose did not apply himself to his studies for two years, he passed the Intermediate Examination with credit in 1915. He also took the honours course in philosophy for his B.A. degree, and for the first time took his studies seriously in college. This was to be short-lived. A British professor named E.F. Oaten physically assaulted some of Subhas' classmates when they were walking along the corridor.

Since Subhas was the class representative, he brought the incident to the notice of the Principal but failed to get a satisfactory answer. All students went on a general strike and the Principal slapped a fine on all absentee students.

Less than a month later Professor Oaten was assaulted by a group of students for some more racial remarks. Subhas was an eye-witness but did not take part in the attack. The Government ordered the closure of the college. The Principal and the Government disagreed over the wording of the order and the former quit the post, but before that he sent for Subhas and said: "Bose you are the most troublesome man in the college. I suspend you." Subhas thus stood expelled from the college. Suddenly, his educational career was at an end. Though it was a huge setback, Bose experienced satisfaction because he had sacrificed himself for a noble cause. Subhas left Calcutta and went back to his parents in Cuttack.

Surprisingly his parents understood his mind and sympathized with him. With studies out of the way, Subhas again entered social service, especially voluntary nursing of the poorer section of the community suffering from cholera or smallpox, and arranging the cremation of the victims of these diseases by raising money for the funeral expenses.

After one such year in Cuttack, Subhas returned to Calcutta. The university, where he had applied took a long time to reconsider his case, and Subhas tried to enlist himself in the 49th Bengali Regiment, but was rejected because of his defective eyesight. A year later the university accepted his application. He joined the Scottish Church College, which was arranged largely through the efforts of Subhas' second brother Sarat Chandra Bose. Subhas pursued his studies seriously and also joined the university unit in the Indian defence force (the Territorial Army). During training in a camp near Fort William, Subhas wore khaki and took musketry practice. The mystic had turned into a soldier. This was his first experience of the uniform and seemed, in retrospect, a portent of the things to come.

At the B.A. Examination in 1919 Subhas secured first class honours in philosophy, but to his disappointment was placed second in order of merit.

From Calcutta to Cambridge

He had already enrolled in experimental psychology for his M.A. course when one day his father came to Calcutta and asked Subhas if he would like to go to England to study for the Indian Civil Service Examination. In those days, I.C.S. was a revered ambition of young Indians. Though he had misgivings about joining the I.C.S. and serving under the British, he made up his mind to go.

Subhas sailed for England on 15 September 1919. After reaching there five weeks later, he got admission in Cambridge University. At the time that he sailed for England the situation in India was grim. The nation was still stunned by the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Punjab was under martial law, and strict censorship ensured that there were only vague rumours in Bengal of some terrible happenings at Lahore and Amritsar. By and large, the Indians were ignorant of what had been going on in the Punjab, and Subhas left for England unenlightened.

At Cambridge, Subhas concentrated only on studies and when the examination results were declared, he came out fourth. It was then that he stood at the cross-roads of his life: Should he or should he not accept a job under the British Government?

He immediately wrote to the well-known Bengali leader C.R. Das. He started this correspondence before his return to India and wrote his first letter to Mr. Das, dated 16th February, 1921. He sought his advice as to what he should do in order to be of some service to the country. His spiritual dilemma he had solved already, for he had decided that he would not serve in the Indian Civil Service and would devote his life to the service of his country.

He wrote to C.R. Das:

"....I should like to know what work you may be able to allot to me in this great programme of national service. Of education and intelligence I have but little—but I believe I have the enthusiasm of youth. I am a bachelor. As regards my education, I have read something of Philosophy because that was my Honours subject in Calcutta and I am doing the same subject in my Tripos here. Thanks to the Civil Service Examination. I have had an all-round education up to a certain standard—such as, Economics, Political Science, English and European History, English Law, Sanskrit, Geography, etc.... I cannot visualise from here which are the suitable fields of work in our country at present. But I have the feeling that on my return to my country, I should be able to take up two kinds of work, teaching in college and writing for newspapers. I desire to give up the service with clear-cut plans. If I can do that, I shall not have to spend time in thinking and I shall be able to enter the field of work immediately after throwing up the service.... My purpose in writing to you is only to ask you what work you may be able to give me in this gigantic programme of national service. If I know that I shall be able to write to my father and brother at home accordingly and I shall be able to prepare my mind in that light.... I have quite a few ideas in my mind regarding the Congress. I think there must be a permanent meeting place for the Congress. We must have a house for this purpose. There will be a group of research students there who will be carrying on research on various national problems. As far as I am aware, our Congress has no definite policy relating to Indian currency and exchange. And then, it has probably not been decided what sort of attitude the Congress should adopt towards the Native States. It is perhaps not known what the stand of the Congress is in regard to franchise (for men and women). And further, the Congress has not probably made up its mind as to what we should do about the Depressed Classes. Because of lack of effort in this regard (that is, about the Depressed Classes), all non-Brahmins of Madras have become pro-Government and anti-nationalist. My personal view is that the Congress has to maintain a permanent staff. They will do research on individual problems. Each one will collect up-to-date facts and figures and the Congress Committee will formulate a policy vis-a-vis every individual problem. Today the Congress has no definite policy with regard to many national problems. That is why I think the Congress must have permanent quarters and a permanent staff of research students. Besides, the Congress should open an Intelligence Department. It has to be so arranged that all up-to-date news and facts and figures about our country are available in the Intelligence Department. Booklets will be published in every provincial language by the Propaganda Department on each and every question in our national life. In such a book the policy of the Congress will be explained and the grounds on which such a policy has been formulated will also be given. I have written so much. These questions are not new to you. I could not help writing about them, as to me they appear to be quite new. I feel that tremendous work lies ahead of us in connection with the Congress. If you so wish, I shall probably be able to make some contribution in this respect".

In another letter, written a little later, Subhas wrote to Das: "Certain ideas are coming to my mind—I am communicating them to you.

(1) I may take up teaching at the National College. I have read a little of Western philosophy.

(2) If you publish a daily newspaper in English, I may work as one of the sub-editorial staff.

(3) If you open a research department for the Congress, I may also work there. I have written about this at some length in my previous letter. I think we must have a band of research students. They will deal with individual problems in our national

life and collect facts about them. Then the Congress will appoint a Committee and that Committee will consider all such facts and formulate the policy of the Congress on each question.

(4) There is plenty of scope for work directed to the spread of education among the common people. Simultaneously with such activity, it will be necessary to establish Cooperative Banks.

(5) Social Service.

It is my view that there is scope for work in the above directions. But it will be for you to consider in which department you would have me. Of course, teaching and journalism are the sort of work that appeal to me. I may make a beginning with these for the present and then, as opportunities present themselves, take part in other activities also. To me, giving up the service means taking the vow of poverty; so I shall not refer at all to my emoluments; bare subsistence will be enough for me.

If I can take up the work with full determination, I believe I shall be able to bring one or two Bengali friends here into it.

In Bengal you are the high priest of the great movement of national service that is now being organised. I have come to the end of what I had to say—now it is for you to let me participate in your great work.

As soon as I quit the service, people here will be asking me what I shall do on my return home. So, for my own satisfaction and in the interest of self-justification to others, I am most anxious to know how you can utilise my service...."

These letters offer a glimpse into the developing mind of Subhas Bose. He had begun to shed his adolescent notions and was moving towards a concrete goal in life. He was beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Bose's study for the I.C.S. turned out to be a blessing for him. Study of modern European history made him aware of the march of events that were taking place all over Europe in the nineteenth century and the freedom struggles of various countries of that continent. He made a deep study of the speeches, letters, memories and autobiographies of patriots, politicians and prophets of nationalism of Europe of the modern era. He studied Bismarck's *Autobiography*, Mettemich's *Memoirs*, Mazzini's writings, Cavour's *Letters* and Garibaldi's exploits at Cambridge. Bose as an advanced student of modern European history and international affairs was definitely influenced by the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. "These original sources", Bose writes, "more than anything else, I studied at Cambridge, helped to rouse my political sense and to foster my understanding of the inner currents of international politics.[6]

At Cambridge, Bose was deeply influenced by the *Risorgimento* (resurrection) Movement of Italy and its heroes. He was also influenced by the movement for unification in Germany, the Sinn Fein Revolution of Ireland and the great Revolution which led to the destruction of the oppressive and corrupt Czarist Regime and establishment of the first Socialist Republic of the world.

He was stirred also by the influence of Joseph Mazzini.

Influence of Mazzini

Mazzini exerted a tremendous influence on the Indian patriots in the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century when nationalism was developing as a powerful political force. "It was Mazzini", writes Surendranath Banerjee, "the incarnation of the highest moral forces in the political arena—Mazzini, the apostle of Italian unity, the friend of the human race, that I presented to the youth of Bengal. Mazzini had taught Italian unity. We wanted Indian Unity. Mazzini had worked through the young. I wanted the young men of Bengal to realize their potentialities..."[7]

Gandhi, the leader of the Indian national movement, was also influenced by Mazzini. Anthony Elenjimittam calls Mazzini the Mahatma Gandhi of Italy, and Gandhi, the Mazzini of India. Mazzini's *Young Italy* was similar to the *Young India* of Gandhi.

Bose, like Mazzini was a man of action though he had a philosophic learnings and his favourite subject was philosophy. Like Mazzini, Bose believed that independence could be achieved through sacrifice—constant sacrifice. Bose also gave importance to the role of the youth and youth organizations in the matter of liberation.

Mazzini was a great believer and champion of the cause of women's liberation and finds his echo in Bose's stress on the emancipation of women, said Mazzini. "Love and respect Woman. Do not seek only consolation in her, but strength, inspiration, a redoubling of your intellectual and moral faculties. Blot out of your mind any idea of superiority to her; you have none whatever. The prejudice of ages has created through unequal education and the perennial oppression of the laws that apparent intellectual inferiority which you use today as an argument for maintaining the oppression."[8] These words influenced Bose, and inspired him in the matter of giving women an equal status with men.

Bose, while at Cambridge, was deeply inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. He was drawn to the Revolution not because of the ideology behind it but because it succeeded in overthrowing the corrupt Czarist regime which reminded him of the British regime in India. He was also impressed because it made him sharply aware of what the power of the people could perform. Subhas Chandra Bose was so much impressed by the Revolution that he said India's progress would come through the masses or through the power of the people. The great Revolution further strengthened his faith in Vivekananda who said that India's progress would be made by the Sudras i.e. peasants, the washermen, the cobblers and the sweepers.[8]

Russia strengthened his hopes about the liberation of India and he hailed the Russian Revolution on several occasions in his life. In his presidential address at the Third Indian Political Conference, London 1933, Bose says, "During the nineteenth century Germany made the most remarkable gift through her Marxian Philosophy. During the twentieth century Russia has enriched the culture and civilisation of the world through her achievement in Proletarian Revolution, Proletarian Government and Proletarian culture.[9] Regarding his views on the industrialization of India and the formation of National Planning Committee Bose was immensely influenced by Soviet Russia.

Bose believed in communism and that it fully supported the struggle for national independence and that is why as an admirer of Soviet Russia, he first wanted to go to Russia for launching a struggle against England, but this endeavour was cold-shouldered by the Soviet authorities twice, first in Kabul, and secondly in Moscow.

The other two factors which went a long way in influencing the career of Bose were the Irish struggle for freedom and Mustapha

Kemal and his steps to strengthen and modernize Turkey. Kemal defended his country politically from foreigners and modernized it by introducing a series of religious, social and economic reforms as a result of which Turkey, a backward and conservative nation, was roused from her age-old torpid state to the status of a modern state largely modelled on European lines.

The freedom struggle of Ireland reminded him of the same struggle that was going on in his country, especially as both countries were ruling under the same imperialist power. Eamon De Valera was an Irish professor and patriot who took part in the Easter Rebellion and who was later imprisoned in 1918 in Lincoln prison for his resistance against conscription. He escaped by breaking the jail in 1919 and went to America for "drumming up both money and moral support across the Atlantic". In America De Valera raised several million dollars for the Irish freedom struggle. De Valera's activities left a lasting impression on Bose and in many of his writings he refers to the courageous exploits of De Valera for liberating his country.

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From Cambridge to Congress

Subhas had well-formed political opinions even before joining active politics. At Cambridge he studied modern European History including some original source books like Bismarck's *Autobiography*, Metternich's *Memoirs* and Cavour's letters, etc. "These original sources", Bose recalls, "more than anything else I studied at Cambridge, helped to rouse my political sense and to foster my understanding of the inner currents of international politics."[1] He was firmly convinced that "a nation can be made only by the uncompromising idealism of Hampden and Cromwell" and followed his goal of achieving India's freedom with an uncompromising spirit.

Right from the beginning, Bose had a different view of achieving India's freedom. Even when he was in England he did not share the faith of Indian Liberals and others that it was the aim of British policy to grant India progressive constitutional concessions, that many of her problems would be solved when Labour came into power.

Subhas had already made up his mind that revolution was needed to fight imperialism and for this the Indian people had to be organised. Ideas of revolution were not to be imported from Russia or from any other country. The Indian revolutionary movement at the time of partition of Bengal was vivid in his mind.

Not surprisingly, due to his radical views Gandhian ideology could not exert any lasting influence on Bose. It was an interesting coincidence that he travelled in the same ship with Rabindranath Tagore and this short contact helped him to confirm his views on the political problems of India. In his own words:

"I had occasion to discuss with him the new policy of non-co-operation adopted by the Congress. He was only anxious that there should be more of constructive activity . . . What he suggested was analogous to the constructive side of the Irish Sinn Fein movement and was completely in accord with my views."[2]

The Indian Civil Service held no interest for young Subhas and he had already chartered his course of action. He was determined to work for the salvation of his country. Bose arrived from Cambridge in Bombay on 16 July 1921, nearly a year-and-half after the Nagpur session of the Congress, where the Indian National Congress had adopted the Gandhian formula of resistance to the British government by passing a resolution on non-violent non-cooperation.

First Meeting with Gandhiji

Almost immediately after landing in Bombay, Subhas Bose went straight to Mani Bhavan to meet Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi's influence had increased tremendously since the special session of the Congress in Calcutta in the autumn of 1920. By the time Bose entered active politics the national movement was entering a new and dynamic phase and Gandhi with his unique weapons of Satyagraha and non-cooperation had emerged as one of the most prominent leaders of the Congress.

He wanted to clarify three points from Gandhi. How were the different activities conducted by the Congress going to culminate in the last stage of the campaign namely, the non-payment of taxes? How could non-payment of taxes or civil disobedience force the government to retire and grant freedom to Indians? How could the Mahatma promise Swaraj within one year as he had been doing since the last annual session of the Indian National Congress? Subhas was satisfied with Gandhi's answer to the first question but the replies to the other two left him dissatisfied. Though the meeting was fruitful, it did not help Subhas in arriving at any clear-cut decision regarding his role in serving India.

Though Bose and Gandhi were in agreement on the ultimate objective of India's freedom they differed fundamentally on the method of achieving the objective. In the words of S.A. Ayer, the Minister for Publicity and Information in the Provisional Government of Azad Hind:

"Agreement on the ultimate objective of India's freedom from foreign rule, but fundamental differences on the method of achieving the objective largely characterised the political relations between these two leaders from the day Subhas first met the Mahatma in Bombay in July 1921 till they met for the last time at Wardha in June 1940. With the Mahatma, non-violence was a living creed; with Subhas, it was an article of faith that the use of force was necessary to dislodge the alien ruler from Indian soil."[3]

Bose's first meeting with Gandhi was "a failure in its immediate purpose"[4] and as it is known to recorded history it "set the tenor for future relations between the two."[5]

Subhas and C.R. Das

Subhas had already contacted C.R. Das through letters from Cambridge and on reaching Calcutta, he took the earliest opportunity to meet him. This meeting proved to be extremely auspicious. After exhaustive and continuous conversations with him about the object of the Congress movements, Bose writes:

"During the course of our conversation I began to feel that here was a man who knew what he was about, who could give all that he had, and who could demand from others all that they could give, a man to whom youthfulness was not a short-coming but a virtue. By the time our conversation came to an end my mind was made up. I felt I had found a leader and meant to follow him."[6]

In C. R. Das, Bose found a leader after his heart and decided to follow him. At that time C. R. Das was at the peak of his career and was the acknowledged leader of Bengal.

Beginning of Active Political Work

When Bose entered the political arena in 1921, India was in the midst of hectic political activities. Gandhi's call for 'Swaraj within a year' had electrified the whole nation. His unique method of non-cooperation tremendously appealed to people. Gandhi gave the call for boycotting legislature, courts and educational institutions. On 1 August 1 1921 the first death anniversary of Tilak was observed throughout the country with huge bonfires of foreign cloth.

During such a period of frenzied political activity C. R. Das made Subhas the principal of the National College which had been started by him. During Bose's student days, he had taken active interest in the new system of education started by Rabindranath Tagore, at Shanti Niketan. Moreover, a net-work of schools and colleges was also necessary to educate children, who had left the Government schools and colleges in response to the call given by the Congress. C. R. Das was immensely satisfied with the ability and sincerity of Subhas and placed him in-charge of the Publicity Board of Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. He was also made head of the National Volunteer Corps.

In September 1921, many Congress leaders headed by Gandhi came to Calcutta to persuade the former revolutionary to join the new non-cooperation movement. Subhas was entrusted with the duty of arranging the meeting between Gandhi and the revolutionaries. In what was later to be an ironic twist of fate, Subhas who had to mediate for arranging a meeting between Gandhi the apostle of peace and non-violence and the revolutionaries who believed in blood and sacrifice.

The non-cooperation movement became the most effective non-violent weapon to protest against the proposed visit of the Prince of Wales to India with the purpose of assuaging public feelings and to make the Indian cooperative in their attitude towards the inauguration of the Montford Reforms. The country was still recovering from the breaking of the war-time pledges by the Government, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and the promulgation of the Rowlatt Act. Instructions were issued by the Congress Working Committee to boycott the visit of the Prince of Wales and a call for a strike (*hartal*) on 17 November, was given. On this day the Prince was scheduled to land in Bombay. It was decided to wave black flags and observe complete *hartal* at the time of his visit. The *hartal* was a grand success and especially in Calcutta the whole administration was paralysed. A Government notification was issued within 24 hours declaring the Congress volunteer organization illegal.

The Provincial Congress Committee of Bengal held a secret closed-door meeting to discuss the situation. C.R. Das, the President of the Provincial Congress Committee was vested with all powers and was also authorised to nominate his successor. Bose had earlier become a member of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and C.R. Das put him incharge of the new movement.

Thousands of people came forward to join as volunteers for courting arrest. There was no room for them in the jails and orders were issued for summary release, but no one was prepared to leave the prison.

On 10 December 1921, Bose was arrested for parading illegally and received a sentence for six months simple imprisonment. "Only six months", he mocked at the magistrate, "have I then stolen a chicken?"[8]

In the prison Bose lived in close proximity with C.R. Das and served him as secretary, cook and valet. His long discussions with him on several subjects helped in his political growth. "For Bose he came to stand in the place of the guru he had sought so long."[9]

The Viceroy, Lord Reading was anxious for a settlement and wanted that the Congress should call of the proposed boycott of the Prince's visit to Calcutta on 24 December 1922.[10] If the Congress acceded to this the Government would order for a general release of all prisoners and arrange for summoning a Round Table Conference of the Congress and Government representatives to discuss proposed reforms.[11] This was communicated to C.R. Das through Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. C.R. Das and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad accepted this offer in spite of opposition from younger elements including Subhas Bose. The year in which Gandhi promised Swaraj was drawing to a close. C.R. Das wanted that something should be done to save the prestige of the Congress[12] as the fulfilment of Gandhi's promise was out of question. He thought that the release of all political prisoners will enhance the prestige of the Congress. The success of the proposed Round Table Conference was in doubt, but its failure would enable the Congress to fight again with redoubled vigour, thought Das.

After the tragic events of Chauri Chaura, Mahatma Gandhi suspended the non-cooperation movement in 1922, and the movement for non-payment of taxes, as a result of which the movement almost grinded to a halt. Soon after, Mahatma Gandhi was arrested in March 1922 and was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. It was then that C.R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru, fearing that the urge for national liberation movement would dry up, formed the Swarajya Party in order to contest the elections and to offer resistance to the Government from within the Legislative Councils. On being released from jail, Subhas busied himself with the relief work started by Sir P. C. Roy in order to help the people in North Bengal, where vast areas were flooded after severe rains. Around this time, he also became Editor of the Bengali daily, called *Banglar Katha* started by the Swarajya Party. Soon, C. R. Das made Subhas the Secretary of the Swarajya Party. Jailed again, but when he was released, he began to function as the Chief Executive Officer of the newly formed Calcutta Corporation on 24 April 1923, of which C. R. Das became the first Mayor. Subhas carried out several municipal reforms during this period and he earned a very good reputation of being an able administrator and the changes he brought about in the administration of the affairs of the city of Calcutta were applauded by everyone. He was only 27 years old.

The Calcutta Municipal Gazette, a weekly civic journal, the first of its kind in the whole country was published. The Commercial Museum established by the Corporation propagated for the Swadeshi movement and compiled and published a directory of indigenous products. Preferential treatment was given to the minorities in civic appointments.

The Calcutta Municipal Corporation became a very powerful forum for nationalist activities, and some of the most forceful speeches of C. R. Das were delivered from the Mayoral Chair.

After joining office, Bose decided to contribute half his monthly salary of Rs. 3,000 for charitable purposes. The entire system of administration was changed. The bureaucratic administration had yielded place to a popular one. The newly elected Swarajist Councillors and Aldermen, including the Mayor, all came dressed in home-made Khadi. Khadi and Swadeshi became the official dress of the Corporation. Municipal parks, streets and roads began to be named after India's great men. Custom of presenting civic receptions to the Viceroys,-Governors and officials was discontinued and instead nationalist leaders, when they visited the city, were given such honours, Education Department for the first time started to provide free primary education to the citizens. Besides free medical dispensaries, a milk-kitchen for supplying free milk to the poor children was established. The departmental heads of the Corporation who were chiefly Britishers, for the first time began to realize that they were public servants and not masters. And if any officer yet felt racial or official superiority the Swarajist Executive Officer proved strong enough to deal with him. Khadi became the official uniform of the Municipal employees. The British government came down heavily on the national workers. Bose had hardly occupies office for six months, when on the morning of 25th October, 1924, he was arrested under the Bengal Ordinance.

The public raised a very strong objection against the arrest of their popular leader while on the other hand the *Statesman* and the *Englishman*, the two leading Anglo-Indian dailies of Calcutta, strongly exhorted the authorities for his detention on the plea that he was "the brain of the revolutionary conspiracy."

The sudden arrest of the Chief Executive Officer had brought the entire work of the Corporation to a halt and the authorities had no other choice but to allow him to carry on the Municipal work within the prison walls till some substitute arrangement was made. For two months his secretary was allowed to take the office files to him, from time to time, to dispose off the pending cases in the escort of a police officer. For two months, Bose performed his municipal duties from jail. The arrest stirred the country's indignation. Everybody, including Gandhi was convinced that the Swaraj Party's success had led the government to take such repressive measures.

Barely under his detention for three months in Alipore and Brahmpore Jails than on 25 January 1925, sudden orders were issued for his deportation to Mandalay. In the cover of darkness, the next evening, under the special escort of Mr. Lowman, Assistant Inspector-General of Police, and a contingent of armed police, Subhas Chandra Bose along with seven other comrades, was taken out of Calcutta in a prison van.

When the news of his deportation was conveyed to his parents, his father uttered, " We are proud of Subhas."

Life in Mandalay Jail

In January, 1925 Subhas was removed to Mandalay Jail with seven other prisoners. He was taken in a ship from Calcutta to Rangoon, his cabin heavily guarded by police. The ship reached Rangoon after four days and from there Mandalay was about a day's rail journey.

Bose was upset by his arbitrary arrest without trial and his speedy and secretive removal to the remote Mandalay, where nobody knew for how many days he was to be detained behind bars. Though being behind bars was not a new experience, this time the circumstances were totally different. Bose, however, soon adjusted himself to the life in the Jail and spent most of his time in the special study of criminal psychology and prison reforms. He also spent long hours in introspection. He wrote to his friend Dilip Roy on 2 May 1925:

> "In any event I have taken my station there and what little I have read of philosophy superadded to my conception of life in general, has stood me rather in good stead here. If a man can find sufficient food for contemplation, then his incarceration need hardly hurt him much unless of course his health deserts him. But our suffering is not merely spiritual—there is the rub—the body too has a say in the business, so that even when the spirit was willing, the flesh might be weak.
>
> "The enforced solitude in which a detenu passes his day gives him an opportunity to think down into the ultimate problems of life. In any event, I can claim this for myself, that many of the most tangled questions, which whirl liked eddies in our individual and collective life, are edging gradually to the estuary of a solution. The things I could only puzzle out feebly or the view I could offer tentatively in days gone by are crystallizing out more and more presentably from day-to-day. It is for this reason, if for no other, that I feel I will spiritually be a gainer through my imprisonment."

On another occasion he wrote to Dilip Roy:

> "Though the climate of the place does not agree with me, I am feeling happier from day-to-day. Problems which to me were unsolved seemed to be near solution. And I must thank solitude and distance from home for giving me that detached view point which is necessary for the solution of many of our problems. If I had been more fit physically I would have profited more by my enforced exile, but as things stand I still hope to make the most of my stay here."

The surroundings in the Jail strengthened his inherently philosophic mind:

> "Usually a kind of philosophic mood instill strength into our hearts in prison surroundings. If a man can find sufficient food for contemplation, then his incarceration need hardly hurt him much... But then is it not true that we are all philosophers in embryo, and it only requires a touch of suffering to awaken the philosophic impulse."

This depression regarding his jail sentence soon lifted as his philosophic nature once again infused in him his typical robust enthusiasm about life.

His optimistic temperament is evident from his letters to his friend Dilip Roy.

> "You write you are getting daily a sadder, if not a wiser man, to contemplate how our earth is soaked by tears of humanity from crust to centre. But then these tears are not all of pain and anguish: there are drops of compassion and love as well. Would you really decline to traverse the shoals of pain and suffering, if you knew that there are richer tides of blessing waiting? So far as I am concerned, I see little warrant for pessimism and despondency. On the contrary, I feel, sorrow and suffering should impel us to courage for a higher fulfilment. Do you think what you win without pain and struggle has any lasting value?"

Subhas knew the price of liberty and from the moment he decided to join the freedom struggle he was mentally prepared for the worst. He could, therefore, adjust himself to any circumstance and saw a silver lining in every dark cloud. On another occasion he said:

> "Do you want the fragrance of the full-blown rose? If so, you must accept the thorns. Do you want the sweetness of the smiling dawn? If so, you must live through the dark hours of the night. Do you want the joy of liberty and the solace of freedom? If so, you must pay the price. And the price of liberty is suffering and sacrifice."[19]

It was is Mandalay that Bose received the greatest shock of his life when the news of Deshbandhu Das's death on June 16, 1925, reached him. More than a great loss to the nation it was a severe personal loss to Bose as C.R. Das, was his friend, philosopher and guide. He wrote to Dilip Roy:

> "I am desolate with a sense of bereavement. For I feel so vividly near to the great departed in the world of memory that it is impossible for me just now to write."

The grief coupled with the climate of Mandalay did not agree with him and he fell seriously ill with an attack of broncho-pneumonia in the winter of 1926. It turned out to be a case of suspected tuberculosis and Subhas was transferred to Rangoon for medical examination. The medical board recommended that he should no longer be detained in prison. Instead of releasing him on the basis of the medical report the Government made a conditional offer in the Bengal Legislative Council that Bose will be released from detention provided he agreed to go straight away to Switzerland from Burma without touching Indian soil for recouping his health at his own expense. The motive was obvious. The government considered him as a dangerous political person. Subhas rejected this conditional offer with contempt[22] as this would have meant the acceptance of indefinite exile. In his letter to Sarat Chandra Bose he wrote:

> "I have no desire to become a voluntary exile from the land of my birth."[23]

Subhas was confident that men may be confined behind the bars or may be suppressed for the time being but ideas will work out their own destiny.

Philosophy tinged his thoughts:

> "Ideas will work out their own destiny and we who are but clods of clay encasing sparks of the Divine Fire have only to consecrate ourselves to these ideas. A life so consecrated is

bound to fulfil itself regardless of the vicissitudes of our material and bodily existence. My faith in the ultimate triumph of the ideas for which I stand is unflinching and I am, therefore, not troubled by thoughts about my health and future prospects... I am not a shopkeeper and I do not bargain. The slippery path of diplomacy I abhor as unsuited to my constitution. I have taken my stand on a principle and there the matter rests. I do not attach such importance to my bodily life that I should strive to save it by a process of higgling. My conception of values is some-what different from that of the market place and I do not think that success or failure in life should be determined by physical or material criteria. Our fight is not a physical one and it is not for a material object either. As St. Paul said 'We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world', against spiritual wickedness in high places, 'Our cause is the cause of freedom and truth and as sure as day follows night, that cause will ultimately prevail. Our bodies may fail and perish but with faith undiminished and will unconquerable, triumph will be ours. It is, however, for providence to ordain who of us should live to witness the consumption of all our efforts and labours and as for myself, I am content to live my life and leave the rest to destiny."

On another occasion he said:

"Let no one grieve that the chances of my release are few and far between. Above all, please console my dear parents—for their's is the hardest lot—and all those who love me. We have got to suffer a lot, both individually and collectively, before the priceless treasure of freedom can be secured. Thank God! I am at peace with myself and I can face with perfect equanimity any ordeal that He, in His Wisdom, may choose to visit me with. I regard myself as doing penance in my own humble way for the past sins of our nation and I shall be happy in my atonement. Our thoughts will not die, our ideas will not fade from the nation's memory, and posterity will be heirs of our fondest dreams: This is one faith which will sustain me in my tribulations forever and forever."

Detained in jail without any trial, his health was fast deteriorating. Bowing to great public pressure orders were issued for his transfer to Almora Jail. Before his boat reached Calcutta he was removed to the Governor's launch for another medical examination. The board wired the report to the Governor at Darjeeling. The police was opposed to the release of Bose and the police officer tried to influence the medical board to submit a report in favour of his transfer to Almora or departure to Switzerland, but they could not succeed. The doctors urged the immediate release of Bose in view of his health. He was released on 16 May 1972, after a long incarceration of about three years.

The people's choice fell naturally upon Subhas Bose to lead the province. He was elected President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. Gradually, Bose overcame the shock he had received at C.R. Das's death and started his political activities once again, this time with renewed enthusiasm.

Six months after his release the annual session of the Indian National Congress was held at Madras under the presidentship of Dr. Ansari, the veteran Muslim leader of Delhi.

The Bengal delegates now attended the session under the leadership of Subhas Bose where he was appointed General Secretary of the Congress along with Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Sahib Qureshi.

In 1928, he also became the General Officer Commanding of the Volunteer Corps. The year 1928 was significant. In 1928 itself, some months after the Calcutta Congress, Subhas was elected President of the All India Trade Union Congress, a post he occupied until 1931. This election marked a turning point in his career because it meant that Bose had finally emerged from the shadow of C.R. Das' personality and had very slowly but surely found his feet in the political arena. He became aware for the first time that he would also lead and act. By becoming President of the Trade Union Movement, Bose was able to draw the so-far untapped strength of the working classes in India for the freedom movement.

Several sittings of Nehru Committee and All-Parties Conference were also held this year to thrash out the principles of new constitution. It was also the time when an Imperial Commission came to India to study the social, economic and political conditions of the country and to watch "up to what extent it is desirable to establish the principles of responsible government" in the country.

The Nehru Committee by considerable majority adopted Dominion Status as the basis of the constitution.

However, many were fiercely opposed to it. Men like Subhas Bose were not interested in the constitutional bickerings of the elderly leaders. The idea of Dominion Status as India's goal was totally unpalatable to him. The leftists held a private meeting at Lucknow and at the instance of Pandit Jawaharlal and Subhas Chandra Bose, it was decided that a separate body called the Independence League, should be formed with a view to protest against the decisions of Nehru Committee and consequently of the All-Parties Conference.

Subhas Bose for the first time raised the banner of revolt here and took a bold stand against the compromising tendency visible in the Congress programme.

The second significant event of the year was the arrival of the Simon Commission in India. The Indian National Congress again adopted a passive stand with mere black flag demonstrations and the boycott of all the functions connected with it. Subhas Bose, a radical force, and who in the whole of his life stood for a decisive struggle with the British Imperialism stressed upon Gandhiji to give a positive lead to the country at the arrival of the Simon Commission.

In his own words, "There is absolutely no doubt that if the Congress Working Committee had taken courage in both hands, they could have anticipated the movement of 1930 by two years and the appointment of the Simon Commission could have made the starting point of such movement. When the writer (Mr. Bose) visited the Mahatma in May 1928, at his Ashram at Sabarmati, he reported to him the enthusiasm which he had met in many provinces and begged him to come out of his retirement and give a lead to the country. At that time the reply of the Mahatma was that he did not see any light, though before his very eyes the peasantry of Bardoli were demonstrating through a no-tax campaign that they were ready for a struggle."

The early months of 1929 witnessed an outburst of revolutionary activity in North India climaxed by the Bhagat Singh episode and self-immolation of Jatin Das. All through that year Subhas Chandra Bose presided over a series of student and youth conferences in Bengal and elsewhere. To the youth and students he preached patriotism, integrity, sacrifice, courage and unswerving adherence to the national goal of complete independence. The year also saw a growing unrest among the working class. The Meerut Conspiracy Case opened in 1929. The agitation among the nationalist intelligentsia, students, youths and working classes encouraged Netaji to demand a bigger political campaign against the British. In the Bengal Congress he made his presence felt among the more moderate and right wing forces. The All Parties Conference held towards the end of the year in response to the British Viceroy's announcement of a Round Table Conference based on the report of the Simon Commission had most Congress leaders including Jawaharlal Nehru offering cooperation to the British in their manifesto and were prepared to negotiate on the basis of Dominion Status, Subhas Chandra Bose, Saifuddin Kitchlu and Abdul Bari issued a separate manifesto fiercely opposing Dominion Status and a Round Table Conference on British terms.

The Lahore Congress saw the culmination of Subhas Chandra Bose's dream of the declaration of the national goal as complete independence. But what Netaji demanded at Lahore was a complete programme of action based on the organization of the peasantry, working classes and the youth in one solid phalanx to enforce the national demand. According to him there could be no half-way measures in the national struggle. It had to be a "total boycott" of British rule and administration leading to a parallel government.

Subhas Chandra Bose was arrested as soon as he returned to Calcutta from the Lahore Congress and sentenced to an year's imprisonment.

When Gandhi launched his Dandi March in 1930, Netaji was in jail and he avidly followed the development of the national resistance movement from behind prison walls. The government's atrocities led to a spate of revolutionary terrorism in the country, particularly in Bengal. The Chittagong Armoury Raid took place in April 1930 and the nationalist and government forces locked horns for months. The British Government released the report of the Simon Commission in June 1930. It was rejected outright by all parties. The mood of the people was now upbeat. Subhas Chandra Bose was elected Mayor of Calcutta while in prison. He could assume office only on his release later in the year. He was again rearrested in January 1931 and was sentenced to a short term in Malda district.

The Importance of Lahore Congress

The Lahore Congress is important for more than one reason. The differences between Subhas Chandra Bose and Pandit Motilal Nehru on the question of Nehru Report and Communal Award were widened.

At Lahore the Congress accepted what it had rejected at Calcutta, and Complete Independence became the goal of the Congress. Subhas Bose moved an amendment to the main resolution urging complete boycott and establishment of a parallel government on Sien Fien model in India. He further urged that the Congress should concentrate on the task of organising the workers, peasants and youth in the country. The Congress rejected his amendment at which he made a forceful speech in which he warned the Congress in these words: "The country will have another twelve months to consider my amendment on its merits. I have no shadow of doubt that my proposition or something very much like it will be adopted by the next Congress. My only regret, however, is that meanwhile much valuable time will be lost. But this cannot be helped, for political education is sometimes a slow process particularly when the influence of practically all prominent leaders is on the opposite side."

Bose was opposed to the Round Table Conference and said that no useful purpose could be served by such conferences. "Even if Dominion Status is offered tomorrow", said Bose, "our duty will be to organise the younger section into a republican party as was the case in Ireland and to keep up the agitation for Independence."

In 1931, while leading a procession as Mayor of Calcutta on Independence Day, 26 January 1931, he and his comrades were brutally attacked by British mounted police and taken into custody. While in prison came the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of March 1931. The terms of the Pact were a great disappointment to him. On his release he rushed to Bombay to meet the Mahatma, then travelled with him to Delhi and held lengthy discussions with him. The Karachi Congress was held under the shadow of tragedy as Bhagat Singh and his comrades were executed in total disregard of public opinion in India. Netaji welcomed the Karachi resolution of Fundamental Rights which outlined the socio-economic objectives of the party. Interestingly, Jawaharlal Nehru was elected President for the Lahore session at Gandhiji's instance while Subhas Chandra Bose and others like him with leftist leanings were excluded from the Congress Working Committee both at Lahore and Karachi.

Coinciding with the Karachi Congress, Netaji was called upon to preside over the Naujawan Bharat Sabha, a militant youth organization founded by Bhagat Singh. He offered an alternative programme on socialist lines to that of the Congress which he thought was based on too many adjustments and compromises than needed.

When Mahatma Gandhi was selected by the Congress Working Committee as the sole representative of the Congress to the Second Round Table Conference, Netaji considered this to be a tactical error. Despite his misgivings, Subhas Chandra Bose sent the following telegraphic message to Mahatma Gandhi on the eve of his departure for England: "Our hearts with you wherever you go awakened India will follow you with expectant eyes confident that the Nations honour will be safe in your keeping we shall fight again if need be but not accept less than our birthright."

As anticipated by Netaji, the conference turned out to be a mockery of the ideals it had set out to achieve. The British Government set up a whole lot of self-appointed leaders and sectarian elements, against Gandhiji and swiftly turned the tables on him by focussing the problem of minorities and that of the future federal structure of India, neatly sidestepping the main issue of national independence. According to Netaji, Gandhiji's London visit was badly planned from all points of view. It was a disillusioned Mahatma Gandhi who returned from London. Further, Netaji regretted that no attempt was made to put Gandhiji in touch with people and circles who counted in European politics outside England.

In May 1931, Netaji presided over the Naujawan Bharat Sabha conference in Uttar Pradesh and in July the Calcutta session of the All India Trade Union Congress. The Bengal Political Conference held in December under Netaji's inspiration felt that civil disobedience, should be restarted. When Gandhiji wrote to the new Viceroy Willingdon upon his return from England, he only got a negative and unfriendly reply. The time was ripe for reviving the second civil disobedience movement.

While the first Civil Disobedience Movement may have caught the British Government napping Gandhiji's novel method of resistance in 1932 saw them better prepared to deal effectively with the second civil disobedience. And they went on the offensive. The notorious Lord Willingdon had replaced the more mild Lord Irwin, as Viceroy and he cracked down heavily on the agitationists. All the leaders namely, Mahatma Gandhi, Subhas, Pandit Jawaharlal and others, were rounded up. By 1931 it became evident that next to Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, Bose became the third most important leader in the Congress ranks.

In January 1932, Subhas Chandra Bose was first lodged in a small jail in a remote place called Seoni in Central Provinces. He was soon joined there by his elder brother Sarat Chandra, a leading lawyer, front rank Congressman and Alderman of Calcutta Corporation.

Prison walls stood between Bose the march of events in 1932. When the British announced the so-called Communal Award in August 1932, Mahatma Gandhi went on a fast in vindication of his stand on the question of communal electorates. Hindu leaders assembled in Bombay and finally an agreement was reached abolishing completely separate electorates. The Poona Pact enabled the Mahatma to break his fast. The turn of events completely bewildered Netaji who felt that the prime issue of Indian independence was be side-tracked and drowned by the emotional execution over Gandhiji's fast. He thought that the wily British Government had over again got the better of the Congress by successfully side-tracking the main issue of national independence. Civil disobedience and mass satyagraha took a sudden back seat as issues like anti-untouchability campaigns and debates on temple entry bills came to the forefront. Subhas Chandra Bose and the radical elements, could not help but feel resentful.

Since the health of the Bose brothers was worsening, they were shifted to Jabalpur Central Jail. From there Netaji was shifted from place to place ostensibly for medical diagnosis and treatment —first to Madras, then to Bhowali and finally to Lucknow. However, his health failed rapidly. Left with no option, the British Government agreed to allow Netaji to proceed to Europe for treatment and cure but, would not release him in India. Before his departure he was brought back for a while to Jabalpur jail where his brother was held. In the middle of February 1933 Subhas Chandra Bose sailed for Europe on board the Italian ship S.S. Gange on another enforced exile which was destined to open a new chapter in his political career.

REFERENCES

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2. Bose, *The Indian Struggle, 1920-34*, p. 88.
3. Ayer, Introduction, *Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose*, p. 12.
4. *Ibid*.
5. Jog, *In Freedom's Quest*, p. 41.
6. Bose, *The Indian Struggle, 1920-42*, p. 55.
7. See R. Palme Dutt, *Indian Today*, pp. 344-46.
8. Hugh Toye, *The Springing Tiger*, p. 29.
9. *Ibid*.
10. Gandhi wrote: "Lord Reading must understand that non-cooperators are at war with the Government. They have declared rebellion against it." *Young India*, 15 December 1921.
11. Cf. K.M. Munshi wrote: "It is impossible as I look back over the span of forty-five years, not to entertain the feeling that had Gandhiji accepted Reading's offer we might have obtained Dominion Status before 1939 without having to partition India." *Pilgrimage to Freedom*, p. 23.
12. Bose, *The Indian Struggle*, 1920-42, p. 67.

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Propagates India's Freedom in Europe

In view of his rapidly deteriorating health, British authorities in India gave permission to Subhas Chandra Bose to leave India and go to Austria for medical treatment. Like all Indians before Independence, he carried a British passport. His ship, S.S. Ganges, left the shores of Bombay on 23 February 1933.

In Vienna, thanks to some good physicians, after a few weeks of treatment and rest, Bose began to recover rapidly. As soon as he was strong enough, he began to take active interest in his new surroundings and sought to establish new contacts with people in Europe to promote the cause of national struggle in India. In Vienna, another leading Indian politician was also convalescing, Vithalbhai Patel. Patel not only shared his interest in promoting international goodwill for Indian nationalist aspirations but also his anti-Gandhi political opinion.

Joined Hands with Top Ranking Leaders

Bose met several people in Vienna for establishing an Austrian-Indian Society there. He won many friends in influential, cultural and economic circles in Austria and succeeded in establishing many cultural as well as economic ties between Austrians and Indians. He also began corresponding with many

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* V.J. Patel was the elder brother of Sardar Vallabhia Patel, but unlike his brother he was a staunch critic of Gandhi.

European writers and scholars such as Romain Rolland. By personal contacts, correspondence, lectures, writings, etc. he strived to create in Europe an interest in the Indian national movement and to win their sympathy for the struggle for freedom carried on by the Indian National Congress and moral support against Great Britain.

A few months after Bose arrived in Europe in May 1933, news reached him that Gandhi had suddenly suspended the Civil Disobedience Movement for six weeks and started negotiations for a compromise with the government. Bose reacted strongly to what he thought to be an ignoble surrender to the British. He and Patel issued a pont manifesto from Vienna denouncing Gandhi's leadership and calling for an alternative radical militant leadership.[2] The statement said that "this action of Mahatma Gandhi... is a confession of failure." Nobody in India had dared to do so inspite of their resentment against the Gandhian action.

Subhas Bose was asked to visit England by the Indian residents there, who wanted him to preside over the All-Parties London Conference of Indians. But the British Government denied him entry to England. The India office refused to grant him passport. He, however, sent his written address which was read by Dr. Bhatt in absentia. It was a remarkable address in which he appealed to the Indian residents there to view the situation in India in light of the changes taking place all over the world and to do propaganda in favour of India. Criticising the policy of Mahatma Gandhi he said:

"If the Delhi Pact of 1931 was a blunder, the surrender of 1933 was calamity of the first magnitude. By suspending the Civil Disobedience Movement at a critical hour, work was suffering and the sacrifices of a nation for the thirteen years are virtually undone."

At this conference he, for the first time, placed the proposal of "Samavadya Sangh" and a committee of 22 members was formed to thrash out the aims and objects of the party. The speech has been regarded by many as one of his fundamental political writings which reveals an amazing clarity of vision and fixity of a well-defined purpose.

Bose was not permitted to enter England, but there were countries in South Eastern and Western Europe, to which Subhas Bose was permitted to go. In Vienna, Bose discovered to his great satisfaction that the neighbouring countries of Austria, viz., Czechoslovakia and Poland reacted very positively to his efforts and showed a great deal of sincere understanding of the struggle for national independence being carried on by the Indian people. The Consul General of Czechoslovakia extended a visa to visit that country. He went to Prague by air in July, 1933, and stayed there for ten days. He was given a very enthusiastic reception in that "middle-class republic of Europe." The Lord Mayor of Prague himself received him. He was provided all the facilities to see the worked done by Prague Municipality. He visited Masaryk Homes for the lepers and invalids, and went to see Prague University, Skoda Factories at Pilson and several other places. He travelled to Czechoslovakia partly also to continue his treatment at the Spas of Karlovyvary (Karlshbad). While in Czechoslovakia he often visited Prague and held political discussions with Dr. Benes, the then Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovakia had won its national freedom only after the First World War, so Bose and his Czech friends discovered many common interests which united India and Czechoslovakia. He studied the famous Czech Youth Movement 'Sokol'. He acquainted himself with the history of the Czechoslovakia Legion which was created during the First World War outside Czechoslovakia with the support of Great Britain and Russia to fight for the liberation of that country from Austrian domination. At the inauguration of this Society at the Lubkowitz Palace in Prague, Subhas Bose had the opportunity for the first time in Europe to speak on India's struggle for freedom carried on by the Indian National Congress.[1]

The Polish Minister in Prague, whom Subhas Bose had come to know in the meantime, showed a great deal of sympathy—like the Czechs—towards India's fight for freedom. And he helped the latter to travel to Poland by giving him a visa to that country. In Prague, the British Vice-Consul became extremely sympathetic towards Bose and raised no objection to his travel to Poland (although originally the British Government had limited his stay to Austria only).

When he returned to Vienna, the condition of Patel had deteriorated and they both went to Nyon but Patel soon succumbed to his illness. His body was sent to India and Subhas Bose accompanied it upto Marseilles. His death was not only a great loss to the nation but also a setback to the principles for which he stood. He had devoted himself to doing propaganda in foreign countries in favour of India and along with Subhas had prepared a great scheme about it but he died soon and Subhas Bose was left alone to carry on the work on behalf of India in Europe.

On his return he stayed at Geneva, and studied the League of Nations and to explore the possibilities of utilising it for advancing the cause of Indian independence. Soon he discovered that the league was completely dominated by Britain and France, and later on went to France for some time. In Italy an Asiatic Students Conference had been called which was inaugurated by Mussolini himself, and Subhas Bose participated in it. He stayed for some days in Rome and for the first time observed closely the youth movements and discipline among those people.

Bose, visited practically every country in Europe during his four years' stay there but he did not go to Soviet Russia though he had been invited.

From Warsaw, Subhas went to Germany as he wanted to establish contact with those other than Austrian, Czech and Polish politicians. He was keen to meet and know leaders of Germany and Italy because these countries then became centres of important political movements in Central Europe. He was fascinated by how Hitler and Mussolini had succeeded in creating anew such extraordinary national consciousness amongst the German and Italian masses and overpowering them with a new vision of national greatness.

In July 1933, Subhas Chandra Bose arrived in Berlin from Warsaw at the railway station of Friedrichstrasse. The German Foreign Office had been alerted by the Indo-German Society in Berlin to receive him at the station and to help him during his stay in Berlin.

Subhas Bose did not, however, want to become the guest of the German Government, and merely wanted to discuss with them issues relating to the overall German policy towards India and particularly to her struggle against Great Britain. He, therefore, left the guest house and went to stay in Grand-Hotel-am-Knie in Charlottenburg at his own expense. In Berlin, Subhas Bose was anxious to speak to Hitler to change his entirely wrong judgment of the Indian people and the fight for freedom which the Indian people were carrying on to liberate themselves from the British yoke. He wanted Hitler to change his damaging comments about Indians in the new edition of his book *Main Kampf.*[2]

Either because of lack of time or many other important engagements, neither Chancellor Hitler nor Mr. Goebbels could see him.

At that time, the spokesmen of the German Foreign Office were Mr. Pruefer, Mr. Diekhoff and Mr. Schmidt-Rolke. They, however, refused to mediate and arrange a meeting between Hitler and Bose on grounds that the German government should remain neutral in the fight which the Indian people were carrying on against Great Britain.

In reality, Bose did not expect too much from Germany at that movement; all that he could do was to write a letter of protest to the well-known daily of the National Socialist Party, the *Volkischer Beobachter* which in an issue in July 1933 wrote that "Germany has no interest whatsoever in the internal affairs of India".

Bose could, however, meet the leaders of some of the dissident groups of the National Socialist Party.

This secret but dissident group of the National Socialist Party assured Bose that it would help the revolutionary organisations in Bengal with technical equipment, arms and ammunition as well as instruments for sending secret messages, etc. if a reliable method of transporting these materials from Germany to Bengal could be established.

However, attempts of establishing liaison between secret organizations in Germany and the underground organizations in Bengal, however, failed to achieve much.

In Berlin, Bose also studied the state of affairs of the Indian colony in Berlin. Since the end of the First World War, Indians living in Berlin had been divided into three separate groups and one such group consisted of those political exiles who, during the First World War, had worked together with the German Foreign Office to organize a revolt in India.

One of the groups was composed of newly arrived young students in Berlin, and its organizer was A.C.N. Nambiar who had been asked by Jawaharlal Nehru to organize an Indian Information Office in Berlin. The function of this Office was to supply information to German newspapers about the arrival of important Indians in Germany, give advice and help to Indian students and find seats in German universities or apprenticeships in industries for Indian students who were then coming to Germany in large numbers. Nambiar later went on to become a close associate of Subhas Chandra Bose in Germany during the Second World War.

The small countries of Balkans, which Subhas Bose visited in April, 1934, were sympathetic in their views and attitude to India. In Sofia, Budapest, Bucharest, people listened anxiously to what Bose said about India. In Belgrade he encountered some trouble. The leading newspaper of Belgrade *Politika* sent its reporter to interview him on his arrival in the Yugo-Slav capital. From him Bose learnt that not long ago they had published an article favouring British rule in India and written by the Nawab of Rampur, who passed through Belgrade. But they were keen to have an Indian nationalist's point of view of British rule. Subhas agreed about it, but later, the editor informed him saying that the Foreign Office had forbidden the article.

Some time after that Subhas Bose received news that his father had fallen seriously ill. He decided to fly to India. When he landed, he was served with an order under Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act. The order put restrictions on his movements, and ran as follows:

1. To proceed at once to 38/2, Elgin Road and reside there till further orders.

2. Not to be absent from the precincts of the said house and not to interview any visitor at any time.

3. Not to correspond, converse, or communicate or associate in any manner with anybody, save the members of your family actually living at 38/2, Elgin Road.

4. To deliver unopened to the Deputy Superintendent of Police, Special Branch, Calcutta, or the officer specially deputed by him for the purpose all books or communications (whether such communications be in the nature of telegrams, letters, postal packages or otherwise) received by you from any source whatever

or intended for to whomsoever address and whether the same be received by you or by some agent or servant on your behalf.

5. When so required by the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Special Branch, or by any Magistrate, of facilitate in every way access of such person for any lawful purposes to the premises in which you be living.

6. If you knowingly disobey any of the directions, you will be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to seven years and also liable to fine.

Subhas Bose's father died on the day he landed. He was able to attend the last rites of his father. Though he wanted to stay for some more time in India, but the Government ordered him to return to Europe within a week. Subhas Bose wrote to the British Government asking for permission to stay for one month. "Incarceration in my country is better than freedom abroad," he wrote, but he was not permitted to stay for one month. Moreover, his health had considerably deteriorated and his physician urged him to come back to Vienna. While in Calcutta he was also X-rayed. On 10 January 1934, he sailed from India for Europe.

The first visit of Subhas Bose gave a new orientation to his outlook of life.

The real change in his views was brought about by his second visit. He first landed at Naples, then went to Rome and spent about a week there. Rome had great fascination for him because he said: "It is a blend of the old and the new." He had devoted his early visit to studying municipal administration and sight-seeing, but his second visit was that of a keen political observer.

While in Europe Bose had become thoroughly disillusioned with the Gandhian Philosophy and strategy by winning the independence of India. He had set his mind on evolving more radical methods after studying the methods of mass organization and armed revolt in the various European countries which had won their independence by applying this method.

He visited Berlin and Rome several times and met the top ranking leaders of the Nazi and Fascist parties to ascertain their views about India's freedom struggle. He met Mussolini several times, but Hitler kept him waiting for a year before he met him. While discussions with Mussolini were satisfactory his German experience was somewhat disappointing. He enquired as to when Germany would strike at Britain, "so that India might also take up arms simultaneously against the British." But Hitler was never in favour of the Indian Declaration of independence against Britain and said as much.

He also visited other capitals like Prague, Warsaw, Istanbul, Belgrade and Bucharest. In addition to his personal contacts with statesmen and political leaders, he made a careful study of the history and nature of popular revolutionary movements against the oppression and exploitation of ruling classes. He was specially interested in the technique of seizure of power.

"Bose studied objectively how Lenin and Stalin, de Valera and Kamal Ataturk, Hitler and Mussolini succeeded in awakening the slumbering desires of the masses and in realizing their aim. Simultaneously, he researched into the causes of the apathy of the Indian masses who had become so indifferent to their misery. He studied ways of awakening and organizing them by modern techniques and preparing them for the grim fight for the liberation of their country.

Differences with Gandhiji

Bose wanted world opinion to be mobilised in favour of Indian independence and that India should not hesitate to get help from foreign powers hostile to Great Britain. This was the basis of a fundamental difference with Gandhi. Unlike Gandhi, he was of the opinion that the British would not grant freedom, because the Indian demand was just.

In Italy Bose became aware of the importance of trained cadres of the youth, to rouse national consciousness in the first stage of national awakening of the Indian people.

Bose was very clear in his mind about the approach he wanted to follow. To this end he studied the working of the underground revolutionary organizations which functioned in Ireland, sometimes with German help, as for instance, during the First World War. He was very much impressed by the underground movement of the Sinn Feins and considered this successful historical movement as a good model for India's fight for freedom. Bose highly valued de Valera's leadership and his valiant fight against the British. He was cordially received by the Irish leader who expressed full sympathy for the Indian cause. With Irish support, Bose wanted to make the Indian fight for freedom known to the whole world. He wrote a number of letters to the Irish papers with his purpose and wanted to publish a monthly bulletin in Ireland on India in the English, French and German languages. But his plan for methodical foreign propaganda was rejected by the Congress and as he could not get any financial support, this scheme did not materialise.

Bose also closely followed the historic progress made by Turkey, under the leadership of Mustapha Kemal Pasha who had succeeded in swiftly modernizing a backward oriental country. Bose found an amazing similarity between the Turkish and the Indian conditions and studied the social, cultural and administrative reforms adopted by that country in order to catch up with the technologically advanced countries of the world. He considered Kemal Ataturk as the greatest creative statesmen of this century and was greatly influenced by his ideas and ideals.

Projecting India's Real Image Abroad

It was C.R. Das who first made Bose aware of the necessity of making India known in other countries. The new scheme of work for the Swaraj Party which was drafted by C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru gave importance to Indian propaganda in foreign countries and the organization of a pan-Asiatic League. Discussions on the issue of foreign propaganda had started as early as April 1922, when Bose and other members of the Party were in prison. But during the period of 1922, and 1923 the new scheme of work of the Swaraj Party could not draw much attention as the Party concentrated all its energy towards the capture of legislatures and local bodies.

In Europe Bose spoke copiously on Indian culture and civilization, beside speaking on various aspects of the freedom struggle. He exposed films like *'India Speaks'* and *'Bengali'* which spread anti-Indian propaganda. He openly condemned the film *"Everybody Loves Music"*, in which Mahatma Gandhi appeared in his own dress dancing with a European girl. Realizing the mischief of such kind of propaganda Bose posed the question:

"If this sort of propaganda goes on in their countries, is it to be wondered at, that Indian should be called 'Blackie'—as it happens sometimes in English—or as 'Niger' (Negro)—as is the experience sometimes in Germany? In such circumstances, what should be our reaction? The first and easier course would be to shut our eyes, quietly pocket the humiliation and remain silent. The other and more difficult course would be to start our own propaganda."

To the question whether India could remain indifferent to such hostile propaganda Bose's answer was:

"We cannot. For good or for ill, we are forced by modern circumstances to share the common life of humanity. We cannot, therefore, be indifferent to what the outside world thinks of us. Moreover, we can see with our own eyes what other nations are achieving through a course of systematic propaganda. History further teaches us that for enslaved and suppressed nations especially for those that eschew the path of violence—the sympathy of the civilized world is absolutely necessary and in order to win that sympathy propaganda has to be undertaken."

Bose outlined the objectives of the Indian propaganda abroad as follows:

1. To counteract false propaganda about India.
2. To enlighten the world about the true conditions obtaining in India today.
3. To acquaint the world with the positive achievements of the Indian people in every sphere of human activity.
4. To accomplish this three-fold purpose, Bose suggested a large number of concrete steps to be taken by the Indians.

Bose had all along insisted that the Congress should have a foreign department for a systematic propaganda abroad to see that India was adequately represented at all International Conferences and Congresses. Bose was a visionary. He insisted that the representatives of India in all International Conferences should be the representatives of the Indian people and not the hand-picked nominees of the British Government who dance to their tune in these Congresses and Conferences. He wanted that India as a member of the League of Nations should insist on this before the League.

In Rome he met the ex-king Amanullah of Afghanistan. The Afghan king was very much interested in Indian affairs and enquired from Subhas Bose about the Indian National Congress, etc. The tragic figure of this simple patriotic monarch impressed Subhas Bose.

From Rome Subhas Bose went to Vienna and remained there under treatment of Viennese specialist Dr. Neumann. He then went to Geneva to unveil Patel's statue and from Geneva to Paris. He was constantly kept informed about situation in his country. Bengal was going through a bad time.

One thing which Subhas Bose, devoted his energy during the period of his exile was to defend enslaved India against obnoxious propaganda. Most people in Europe were under the illusion that India was a land where untouchability was the main problem and not hunger and foreign rule. In one of his articles he clearly stated how India was misrepresented in Europe. He wrote, "While we are quite indifferent to this question, missionaries and other 'civilizing agencies' are not inactive. For several decades they have painted India as a land where widows are burnt, girls are married at the age of five or six and people are virtually unacquainted with the art of dressing. I remember vividly that when I was in England in 1920, I was one day passing a lecture hall in front of which there was a pictorial advertisement of lecture to be delivered by a missionary about India. In that advertisement, there were pictures of some half-naked men and women of the blackest complexion, possessing the ugliest features. Ostensibly the lecturer wanted to raise funds for his 'civilizing' work in India, and was, therefore, painting India in this light without the slightest compunction. Towards the end of 1933, a German journalist who claimed to have visited India recently, wrote in a Munich paper that she had seen widows being burnt in India and dead bodies lying uncared for in the streets of Bombay. Recently in a Vienna pictorial paper (*Wiener Bilder*, dated the 30th June) a picture of a dead body covered with insects was printed and there was a footnote saying that it was the corpse of a sadhu which could not be removed for several days because of the Hindu belief that the dead body of a sadhu should not be removed by ordinary men. What surprises me is the careful selection of pictures about India made by propagandists in Europe with a view to depicting India in the worst colours possible.

During years of exile in Europe, Subhas Bose was undergoing a great deal of frustration and felt that he was not able to understand Europe and the Europeans well enough. However, he keenly followed the political events in Europe and read the international press most carefully. He did not see any alternative other than to be patient as long as he lived in Europe, and to prepared in every possible way for his ultimate aim of liberation of India. It was during this period he wrote his famous book *The Indian Struggle, 1920-34*. He had begun work on it in Vienna in 1933, and continued to do so at Karlovyvary in Czechoslovakia and completed it in 1934 in Bad Gastein in Austria. The book was published by a London publisher in January 1935. In the book he endeavoured to present a true picture of the Indian freedom movement; from the point of view of an extremist and the third degree method adopted by the British bureaucracy on the one hand and to narrate the experiences he had in Europe on the other.

While his book received rare reviews in leading newspapers of England, the British Government lost no time in banning its entry into India. In writing the book he was assisted greatly by Miss Emilie Schenkl whom he had come to know shortly after his arrival in Europe and whom later became his permanent secretary abroad. Miss Schenkl had taken a great deal of interest in all the work which Subhas Bose had been doing in Europe. And, when he organized the Free India Centre in wartime Germany between 1941 and 1943, she joined him in Berlin. Comradeship and mutual trust which developed between them during the war years and in February 1942 Subhas Bose married her according to Indian rites. Their daughter Anita was born and grew up in Vienna and eventually took a doctorate from the University of Vienna in 1965.

During this visit to Europe Bose made a thorough study of the history and nature of popular revolutionary movements against exploitation of the masses by ruling classes in countries of Western Europe.

Regardless of ideology he realised that power for a popular cause could be achieved only by disciplined and inspired soldiers. Bose studied objectively how Lenin and Stalin, de Valera and

Kamal Ataturk, Hitler and Mussolini succeeded in arousing the sentiments of the masses and in realising their aims. At the same time he researched into why the Indian masses had become so indifferent to their misery.

In Europe, Italy had successfully achieved national liberation and national unity of a divided people. During his years in Europe, Subhas Bose visited Italy many times. One subject which fascinated him was the underground organization known as Carbonieri. This Italian secret organization actually came into existence in South Italy at the time of the Vienna Congress. Its members were recruited from among high officials of government and officers of the army. From their high position they were able to influence the Italian masses in favour of national unity, more or less in the same way as the Bengali nationalists did in Bengal. Like the Italians, the Bengali people were deeply emotional and could be roused quickly to action when it concerned their vital problems.

The 'Carbonieri' were regarded as the pioneers of Italian freedom movement and of Italian 'Risorgimento' and it was their movement which led finally to the establishment of the Italian State. Their methods were direct action and as *attentat* revolt, that is organized popular rebellion together with occasional limited conflicts with the authorities. Subhas Bose was greatly interested in their method of propaganda for national freedom because the political conditions in Indian and the historical perspective of the Italian freedom movement showed certain similarities. He was influenced by the writings of Mazzini (1805-1872) who had formed a small group called 'Young Italy' from amongst the members of 'Carbonieri' in order to unite, all the Italians who represented at that time the forces for freedom, who believed in republican ideals of government and who accepted the slogans of the French Revolution—liberty, equality and fraternity.

From his study of the history of Italian freedom movement, Subhas Bose gleaned an insight into the technique to be employed in the first stage of the national awakening of the Indian people. He came to believe that young trained cadres would preach to the Indian people and bring national consciousness to them.

Subhas Bose also met Mussolini. Mussolini asked Subhas Bose during their conversation: "Do you really and firmly believe that India will be free soon?" When Bose said "yes", Mussolini asked him again: "Are you for reformist or revolutionary methods for achieving Indian independence?" Bose said in reply that he preferred revolutionary to reformist methods. Mussolini said, "Then indeed you have a chance." Continuing the discussion, Mussolini asked him again: "Have you got any plan for such a revolution?" As Bose remained silent, Mussolini told him: "You must immediately prepare a plan for such a revolution and you must work continuously for its realisation."

Among the European countries, Ireland was probably the most interested in Indian independence. Ireland had, like India, suffered heavily under British domination and had to assert its independence by an open revolt. British oppression and exploitation of the Irish and the Indian people were almost the same. In Ireland, Subhas Bose studied the underground organizations set up by Irish revolutionaries, sometimes with German support as for instance, during the First World War. He was also able to inform himself about the methods adopted by the Germans during that period to help the Irish against Britain. German friends of Bose considered the underground movement of the Sinn Feins as a successful historical model for India's fight for freedom, particularly because he was facing the same enemy. Another similarity which appealed to him was the idea of an alliance with Germany as a potential enemy of Britain. The Imperial German Government had declared during the First World War that if Germany won the war, she would immediately concede Ireland's independence.

Comparative study of the two countries revealed more similarities to Bose, particularly in political trends in pre-independence Ireland and the then India. The Irish Nationalist Party resembled the Indian Moderate parties and, like the Indian Liberal Federation, was in favour of constitutional methods, its aim being 'home rule' which meant limited autonomy under British domination. The 'United Irishman', which arose out of the Sinn Fein movement, represented the Indian Radicals of whom Bose was one, and this Party wanted to free Ireland completely of British domination and make it an independent state.

Bose made a deep study of how the 1916 Easter Rebellion had taken place. From German sources he gathered material on the rebellion and learnt of the avoidable mistakes committed by the leaders. Subhas Bose read in the German archives the decoded telegrams in which the Irish had asked Germany to send arms and the German promise to send 20,000 machine-guns with ammunition as well as hand-grenades to the west coast of Ireland between Good Friday and Easter Sunday of 1916.

It was in Berlin that Subhas Bose took the first steps to establish personal contact with Eamon de Valera, an Irish Professor of Mathematics, in order to win his sympathy, because Bose highly valued de Valera's experience in the fight against the British. He met de Valera early in 1936 with an aim to succeed in popularising the cause of Indian independence in Ireland and, with Irish support, make the cause of the Indian fight for freedom known to the world. He wanted from Ireland, to appeal to the conscience of the world. He wrote a number of letters to Irish papers and supplied them with news and articles on the repressive measures of the British imperialists in India.

He also planned to publish a monthly bulletin in Ireland on India in English, French and German languages and to distribute, it from there to the international press. It came as a blow to him when he came to know that the leaders of the All-India Congress had rejected his plan for methodical propaganda in foreign countries on behalf of the Congress. The right wing Congress leaders also denied him the money left to him by his friend and the Indian nationalist leader Vithalbhai Patel. Before his death in Geneva, Patel had in his will left part of his fortune to Subhas Bose to be used to carry on nationalist and anti-British propaganda abroad. The British law courts also gave their verdict against him in this matter. With his hands tied monetarily, he did not succeed in building up centres of Indian nationalist propaganda in Ireland and elsewhere.

In January 1936, Subhas Bose travelled in an American steamer through the English Channel to Cobb in Ireland. He had a long discussion with de Valera in Dublin and the Irish press gave the event a very favourable coverage. Bose expressed his admiration for the national heroes of Ireland and de Valera wished good luck through Bose to the freedom fighters of India. Bose's visit to Ireland was welcomed whole-heartedly by all political parties there regardless of their differences in internal matters. It gave a fillip to the activities of the Indian-Irish Independence League which had been doing very good work in the common Indo-Irish cause under the presidentship of the legendary first lady of Irish Revolution, Madame Maud Gonne MacBride.

While in Berlin, Subhas Bose also studied the developments in Turkey where, the 'Young Turks' Revolution of 1908 had brought about fundamental changes. Turkey, because of German help, could modernise its army, build up an efficient administration and also make itself more independent of other powers.

Coming from the East, Subhas Bose was interested in learning the experiences of an oriental state in introducing radical social reforms within a short time in order to catch up with the technologically advanced countries of the world.

Subhas Bose had tremendous admiration for the founder of modern Turkey, Kamal Ataturk, whom he regarded as one of the greatest creative statesmen of this century and whose example he tried to emulate in several ways.

During his exile in Europe Bose learnt that if India wanted to make a success of the political system it adopted after freedom it was necessary to build a strong and centralised regime during the transitional decades itself. Since India was made up of various racial and religious groups, all these elements had to be brought within a free society under a certain authority. While in Europe, news reached Bose that he had been elected president of the Congress in April 1936. He wanted to return but the British government issued a warning through its Counsul in Vienna that he would be arrested if he returned to India. Bose rejected the Counsul's warning and sailed for India, reaching Bombay on 8 April 1936.

REFERENCES

1: See Milsoslav Krasa, *Looking Towards India* (Prague, 1969) and Subhas Chandra Bose and Indo-Czech Relations (Calcutta, 1971).
2. England will lose India only it allows its administrative machinery to be dominated by the Indians or when it will be forced to give up India as a result of attack on India by a more powerful enemy of England. The Indian rebels will never be able to realise this . . . I, as a German, prefer to see India, in spite of everything, under British domination than under the domination of any other country.

4

Confrontation with Mahatma Gandhi

(The Congress Years: 1939-41)

Bose and Gandhi. Two extremes of a spectrum, with diametrically opposite ideologies, linked by one common mission: a fierce, burning desire to free their country from the shackles of slavery. In India's freedom struggle, the clash of these two titanic personalities continues to be among the more dramatic aspects of the national movement.

Both these leaders clashed publicly at and after the Tripuri Congress. It is this which fired public sentiment and obscured the fundamental affinity and mutual respect they held for each other. In all probability, had fate allowed Netaji to return to India, they (Gandhiji and Bose) would have cooperated fully and unreservedly in building up the new state of free India.

Among the common characteristics which Mahatma Gandhi and Subhas Bose shared were also their ability to 'transform ideas into facts' and that both of them were more practical idealists rather than dreamers and theoreticians.

Despite their many differences, Subhas Bose was nearer to Mahatma Gandhi than many other Congress leaders, although many amongst them had upper middle class upbringing; and although some of them had, what was known at that time, good British education, yet, they differed considerably in their attitude towards things and specially in their knowledge and understanding of India.

Mahatma Gandhi and Bose had almost the same upbringing having a modern British education without it allowing them to become Anglicized and ensuring that their moorings were very firmly Indian. They grew up in truly Indian surroundings with all its accompanying many shortcomings, beauties and joys.

Though their thinkings, actions and activities, both in the national and international arenas differed vastly, nevertheless one shining virtue united them across the chasm of their differences. In whatever situation they found themselves and wherever they were and whatever they were doing, their minds were always enveloped with the idea of "India", almost to the exclusion of other countries, other peoples and other things. Mahatma Gandhi, has been regarded as one of the most universalist of men. Across the globe, he is regarded not merely as an Indian but also as a great universal human being, whose greatness cut through barriers of nationality and race and language. Whatever he did, he did essentially and completely as an Indian.

Subhas Bose, although not regarded as a universalist in the same mould as Mahatma Gandhi had been, he too, like Gandhi lived and acted essentially and completely as an Indian. They concentrated, both morally and intellectually, on Indian problems. Subhas Bose and Gandhi had no difficulty to become one of the masses although they did not come from typical rural surroundings, nor was their family background particularly rural. This can be attributed to the fact that both had tremendous faith in the Indian way of life and their thinking very much coincided with that of the average Indian, in spite of their higher education and the greater knowledge of the world which they had acquired from the more sophisticated world in which they lived. This was one of the reasons perhaps which made Subhas Bose remark once that he did not require to write a book like *Discovery of India* because he was an Indian and he knew what India was without making an extra effort to discover it. Gandhiji, similarly, felt no awkwardness in Indian surroundings either with the habits, dress, ways of eating and behaving.

Both these gigantic personalities were endowed with great gifts of organization. Mahatma Gandhi had an uncanny grasp of the intricacies of the human mind, especially of a mind which had seen suffered under foreign rule. His genius, therefore, consisted in getting the maximum results out of this medley of people and to marshal their energies for a definite purpose and a definite objective. The atmosphere in the country was heavy with fear and servility and it complicated attempts on the part of any nationalist leader to bring out the capacity and will of the vast mass of the Indian people, for the dangerous and unrewarding task of liberating India from foreign rule. At the time, when Mahatma Gandhi began to organize the masses of the Indian people, the idea of national independence was still in its infancy and considered to be a pipe dream. It seemed a wonderful goal but totally unattainable. British enslavement seemed to have become an unshakable reality.

Gandhi-Subhas: Common Mission

The fact that Mahatma Gandhi succeeded, in spite of these obstacles, to bring people from various classes and different environments and ideas together, shows that his talent for organization was something really unique. He succeeded in creating a nationwide movement of this magnitude and then in holding it together for nearly 40 years, knowing fully well that those who joined the movement and worked for it would have few rewards, but many risks.

Subhas Bose also in the same manner, even under more difficult conditions, lead his men and even succeeded in imposing strict discipline and unity of purpose on the I.N.A. He achieved a major breakthrough with the hard-headed Japanese who, after having conquered practically the whole of South East Asia and Burma, were not particularly interested in India because, the majority of the Japanese did not think of India in terms of Asia, partly because of racial reasons and complicated nature of Indian politics and its social system. Bose was able to not only overcome their objections but convince them of the idea of helping Indian nationalists not for the sake of India only, but for serving Japan's national interests. Quite easily, Mahatma Gandhi and Subhas Bose proved to be the two most superb tacticians and diplomats which India had known in modern times. No one before or after them in India has shown such capacities of drawing men and women unto him for a dangerous objective and to make them work for a particular ideal without reward and without compensation. Their shared talent in managing human beings proved their mental affinity, and they esteemed each other, because they knew how difficult it is "to transform ideals into facts and action."

Another characteristic which both Gandhi and Bose had in common was an impeccable sense of discipline. Sparing neither themselves nor their near ones, they practised what they preached and lived fearless and austere lives, firmly believing that in political field or in national sphere, no real success could be achieved without discipline and a high sense of duty.

Contrary to the popular belief that Gandhiji was soft-going, and indulgent to others, he could be very hard indeed when something concerning national interest or the discipline of the Party was at stake. He imposed on himself a rigorous sense of discipline, and expected that those who worked with him should come up to his own standard. This was true even of Subhas Bose. Behind Subhas Bose's geniality and social amiability, there was something hard and adamant whenever he was confronted with a question that related to the question of greater interest of the country. Both, however, made a clear distinction between personal feeling and national requirement and the first thing they put aside was their own personal feelings when taking decisions on important matters even when those decisions were not popular among many of their colleagues. Bose's painful and dramatic decision to leave Germany only a few days after the birth of his only child, in order to go to South East Asia, was a supreme example of self-sacrifice. As was Gandhi's open chastisement of Kasturba when he fasted to compensate for her failure to obey Ashram rules.

While discussing about Netaji and Gandhiji, it is inevitable that their approach towards achieving liberty for their country come under scrutiny. While Netaji was all for militant methods, Gandhiji believed in non-violence. Many opine that by organising an armed resistance, Netaji deviated from the path of non-violence which was an essential creed of the national movement. However, Gandhiji never denied the right of a national army to fight for national independence and to safeguard the integrity of national territories, in order to secure peace for the people. Netaji firmly believed that violence as interpreted by Mahatma Gandhi referred to personal violence, meaningless bloodshed, rowdyism etc., but not the strength of courage and the spirit of sacrifice which are inherent in an army which is maintained for the purpose of safeguarding freedom and liberty of the state and the people which comprise it.

Subhas Bose had a great regard for Mahatma Gandhi as is illustrated from his broadcast speech from Bangkok (2 October 1943) on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's seventy-fifth birthday. He said: "The service which Mahatma Gandhi has rendered to India and to the cause of India's freedom is so unique and unparalleled that his name will be written in letters of gold in our national history for all time." He said that Mahatma Gandhi had given the Indian people "the two indispensable preconditions for the attainment of independence, namely self-confidence and a country-wide organisation which reaches the remotest villages of India". And then in a broadcast from Azad Hind Radio on 6 July 1944, after the death of Kasturba, Subhas bestowed a title on the Mahatma which was to be linked with his name for all time to come, as he addressed Gandhiji in these terms: "Father of our Nation! In this holy war of India's liberation, we ask for your blessings and good wishes".

Bose left India on board the S.S. Gange on a forced exile from India in February 1933 and disembarked in Bombay on 8 April, 1936 to attend the Lucknow session of the Congress ignoring the warning given to him by the British Consul in Vienna. No sooner had he stepped on Indian soil he was arrested and sent to Yeravda Jail, near Poona, dashing his hopes of attending the Congress session at Lucknow. Nehru who presided over the Congress sent back a message of sympathy and made him a member of the Working Committee.

After a few weeks' detention in Yeravda, Bose was taken to Kurseong in the Darjeeling district of Bengal and interned in the house of his own brother.

A country-wide hartal was observed all over India on 20 May, to protest against Bose's incarceration. Ten months later, on 17 March, 1937, Bose was released unconditionally for reasons of health. Dilip Kumar Roy refers to him in his book *Netaji the Man* "as more spiritual than ever in spite of the rings of shadow round his eyes. His eyes irradiated with a lustre that had not been there eight years ago in the heyday of his activism. Years of struggle and disappointment on top of frequent incarceration had mellowed the exterior austerity of the youthful ascetic."

After spending five months at Dalhousie, he re-entered political activity after five years. The political scenario had also changed. The Congress had fought the general elections held under the Government of India Act, 1935, despite its maiden attempt as a party at the hustings, it virtually swept the polls. The former rebels had now formed governments in six provinces of British India (Bombay, Madras, Bihar, Orissa, the United Provinces and the Central Provinces). In Assam, though the Congress had formed the largest single party but could not assume power. In Bengal, however, it could win only sixty out of two hundred and fifty seats thanks to the infamous 'Communal Award' imposed by the British and tacitly accepted by the Congress. The 'Award' was highly, partial to communalist forces and ensured their victory through 'separate electorates' for different religious communities.

At a meeting of the All-India Congress it was informally decided that Bose should be elected president of the ensuing Congress session at Haripura (Gujarat). In December 1937, Bose went to Europe to convalesce for a few weeks at Bad Gastein, his favourite resort in Austria. It was at Bad Gastein that he wrote, in about ten days, his unfinished autobiography *An Indian Pilgrim*. It was there that he learnt of his unanimous election as the Congress President.

In his first public statement he declared: "It will be agreed on all hands that we have to bring India before the world more than we have done so far. India's problems, after all, are world problems. On our close contact with the progressive movements will depend not only the salvation of India but also of the suffering humanity as well."

Bose felt very strongly that no country should live in isolation, least of all a country like India which was fighting to be free of British enslavement. He spent a good part of his exile in Europe to conducting propaganda for India's freedom. In England he met members of the British Cabinet, like Lord Halifax and Lord Zetland, as well as prominent members of the Labour and Liberal Parties who then professed sympathy for India. His two mid-night meetings with Eamon De Valera were of special significance. De Valera explained the strategy adopted by him to win the independence of Eire. Bose received a number of receptions in London and Cambridge. He made a tremendous impact on the British people by his masterly analysis of the Indian problems. It was reported by the Manchester Guardian that:

"English people who met him for the first time were impressed alike by his pleasant, quiet manner and the decisiveness with which he discussed Indian affairs."

Till 1937 Gandhiji's leadership remained withdrawn, but the Congress was dominated by his ardent supporters and followers. During this period (1933-37) of political retirement, Gandhi exercised his powers through Jawaharlal "who was, in one aspect of his personality, the Plato to Gandhi the Socrates." Even though Nehru's popularity increased during this period, he was unable to provide the "Congress with that quality of leadership which had, since 1919, given it the dominant voice in India." Hugh Toye rightly pointed out that this lack of dynamic leadership in the Congress was responsible for the unimpaired influence of Bose, in spite of his exile in Europe. Bose was a fiery patriot who symbolised the forces of socialism, secularism and pragmatism. He had the promise of an alternative leadership in the Congress and large sections of people who wanted that the country should take radical, progressive and even extremist steps to win the independence of India, admired him as the saviour of the nation, the shortcomings of his political faith notwithstanding. No other Indian leader was capable of substituting for Bose.

Bose never maintained any secrecy about his political ideas and pleaded in favour of a strong centralised party for India. Bose valued unity in the Congress more than any other leader and many years later, probably, that accounted for his determined bid to secure the list of the names for the Congress Working Committee from Gandhi, as per the resolution of the Tripuri Congress, despite his personal unhappiness over such a decision by the Congress. He had sympathies for the Congress Socialist Party which had been formed within the Congress since 1934, but so was the case with Jawaharlal. Bose did not declare his intention to form a separate political party until his expulsion from the Congress in 1939, an action which was not only unwarranted but also highly damaging to the prestige of the Congress.

He was vehemently opposed to the new Constitution of 1935 and the federal scheme that was provided by it.

"The new Constitution was unanimously rejected by Indian public opinion and, in particular, by the Congress, because it was a scheme not for self-government, but for maintaining British rule in the new political conditions, through the help of the Indian princes and sectarian, reactionary and pro-British organisations."

The Constitution of 1935 consisted of two parts—The Federal and Provincial. The Federal plan was autocratic, undemocratic and was grafted to a system of rule by officials. The provincial part of the Act, however, was somewhat less narrow and provided possibilities of popular Government.

There was universal opposition to the Federal part of the Act. Bose was strongly against both the Federal part as well as the provincial part of the Act as he believed that the Ministries, and with them Congress, would be in the danger of corruption by the scant power they had been given." It was a tactical blunder, according to Bose, to accept office until the battle was won.

Gandhi's decision to sponsor the election of his most vocal critic as the Congress President, came as a surprise to many of his followers. The statement issued by Bose along with Vithalbhai Patel from Vienna in 1933, criticising Gandhi's leadership still rankled in the hearts of Gandhi's supporters. But Gandhi, the shrewd tactician, had sponsored Bose's candidature to forge unity between the Left Wing and the Right Wing in the Congress. Also, by electing Bose as Congress President, Gandhi hoped to deflate the Leftists as he had done earlier by sponsoring the case of Jawaharlal. But his gamble did not succeed in the case of Bose, and soon their differences became public.

Haripura Congress: Radicalism Reaches a Peak

Bose as Congress President presided over the 31st Congress session at Haripura.

Bose was well-versed with Gandhi's "incorrigible habit of putting all the cards on the table, his opposition to the policy of social boycott of political opponents, his hope of a change of heart on the part of the British Government", but at the same time he was aware of the supreme need for unity in the Congress to fight against British imperialism and all the impervious designs of the rulers. He, therefore, said:

"The Congress today is the one supreme organ of mass struggle. It may have its Right bloc and its Left but it is a common platform for all anti-imperialist organizations striving for Indian emancipation. Let us, therefore, rally the whole country under the banner of the Indian National Congress."

He appealed to all the Leftist Groups in the country to pool all their energy and resources for democratising Congress and reorganising it on the broadest anti-imperialist lines.

Outlining his policy on the eve of the Haripura Congress session, Bose said:

"My term of office as the Congress President will be devoted to resist this unwanted federal scheme with all its undemocratic and anti-national features, with all the peaceful and legitimate powers, including non-violent non-cooperation if necessary and to strengthen the country's determination to resist this scheme."

Subhas' Declaration

For Bose non-violence was not the main issue. It was only a method and if it failed, he did not hesitate to take recourse to more effective and fruitful methods for the attainment of the ultimate goal—*Purna Swaraj* or complete Independence. In 1935, Bose had posed a question before the French Philosopher and Savant Romain Rolland. If Satyagraha ultimately fails, would Rolland like to see the national endeavour continued by other methods? "The struggle must go on in any case", was the prompt reply. Rolland had replied that he would be sorry if the Satyagraha movement failed. But if it really did, then the hard facts of life would have to be faced and he would like to see the movement conducted on the other lines. Bose could gain strength in the moments of his mental conflict from the following words of Rolland:

"I have not decided against non-violence, but I have decided that non-violence cannot be the central point of our entire social activity. It can be one of its proposed forms, still subject to experiments."

The pursuit of other methods for the attainment of independence formed the basis of the fundamental difference between Gandhi and Subhas. Gandhi occasionally retreated from politics whenever the difference of opinion between him and other prominent members of the Congress became acute. Even so, for years to come Gandhi was Congress and Congress was Gandhi. When Gandhi sponsored the candidature of Jawaharlal Nehru in 1936 for the Congress Presidentship it marked a recognition on his part of the inevitable ascendancy of the forces of socialism.

In spite of his earlier difference with Gandhi and his group, as Congress President, Bose was determined to abstain from doing anything that would offend Gandhi as far as possible and worked determinedly for providing leadership to the Congress in moulding it according to his plan of thinking.

Even in the matter of preparing his Presidential address for the Haripura Congress session, Bose did not deviate from the traditional practice of Congress Presidents in taking advice from the Mahatma.

The presidential address of Bose was remarkable not only for its diversity of contents which anticipated many of the problems of a free India but also its mellowed tone which while being bold and emphatic avoided hurting the sentiments of the old guards.

Bose was prophetic when he hinted at the British policy of Divide and Rule and its application to India. At that time Pakistan was nowhere on the horizon but the British continued their sinister move to divide the Hindus and the Muslims in order to neutralise the demand for transference of power.

Bose had realised that the perpetuation of the princely states in India would mean the perpetuation of the mischief of imperialism through a different counter. This was also another example of the British policy of Divide and Rule:

"From the stand point of Indian unity the first thing to remember is that the division between British India and the Indian states is an entirely artificial one. India is one and people of British India and of the Indian States are identical."

Bose was aware that in a country like India the question of minorities would pose the most difficult problem and anybody interested in the unity of India should devote his energy to the satisfactory solution of this question. He fully endorsed the pronouncement made in this regard by the All India Congress Committee, at its meeting in Calcutta in October 1937.

Far-thinking as usual, even the problem like the increasing population did not escape the notice of Bose. No other front-rank political leader realised the necessity of checking the population explosion for the success of any scheme of national planning.

Bose, in his Presidential address made a strong plea for a *lingua franca* and a common script. He expressed his preference for the Roman script and asked people to consider this question "from the scientific and historical point of view," proving that he was not only an uncompromising nationalist but also a genuine internationalist who wanted that the world should be inhabited by independent nations free from exploitation, living as equal partners mutually contributing to the happiness and prosperity of each other and also to the common development of the human society. He advocated that India should try to develop closer cultural relations with the neighbouring countries.

The Presidential speech of Bose emphasised on socialism and his support for the Congress Socialist Party. It revealed his mature political thinking and his suggestions regarding national planning and family planning speak of his farsighted vision. His advice that the Indian leaders should follow an effective and fruitful foreign policy without being influenced by the internal politics of any country or the form of Government is gaining more importance in the context of the present pragmatic foreign policy of India which is free from any ideological bias.

National Planning received special attention from Bose as he believed that the scientific development of a country with limited resources could be possible only through planning. He convened a conference of the Congress Chief Ministers in Delhi, within three months of the conclusion of the Congress session and later another conference of the Industries Ministers to stress the need for planned economic growth in the country. He gave the example of Russia which was also a backward country like India in 1920, but transformed its economic and industrial position within eighteen years on the basis of national planning.

Gandhi and his followers gave too much importance to cottage industries and thought that large scale industries would not only cripple the cottage industries but also would create severe problems of unemployment. Bose, however, believed that there could be no conflict between cottage industries and large scale industries. He said that the growth and development of basic industries like steel, power supply, machine and tools manufacture should receive top priority. India should build up an infrastructure for industrialization. He stressed that like Japan, India should tackle the problem of technical education and technical research. There should be a permanent national research council. He wanted that an economic survey of the industrial position should be made with a view to securing the necessary data for the National Planning Commission. A National Planning Committee was appointed under the Chairmanship of Jawaharlal Nehru on 19 December, 1938, in Bombay. However, as political fortunes swerved wildly in the next two years, the Planning Committee ground to a halt.

Ever since the beginning of his political career Bose was a champion of communal harmony. In an endeavour to sort out the complex Hindu-Muslim tensions which had started rearing their ugly head, he held a series of meetings with M.A. Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League. All his efforts failed to bring any result due to Jinnah's obduracy. Bose was conscious that a worsening of Hindu-Muslim relations would lead to a vivisection of India and he was determined to avert this disaster. But as ill luck would have it he was removed from the political scene in India and his dream of a united India was belied.

The Final Breach

Bose became the Congress President on the initiative of Gandhi. By 1938, Bose was a front-ranking Congress leader and as the undisputed leader of the Left Wing in the Congress he rightly deserved this high office and Gandhi's choice had the wholehearted support of the nation.

Bose was only too aware that in spite of the surface cordiality from both the sides his policies and principles did not go down too well with Gandhi wing. For the next few months Bose was busy touring all over the country propagating the message of the Congress. He diffused the ministerial crisis which had arisen in the Central Provinces deftly. His relations with Gandhi and other members of the Congress Working Committee were of the best and he earned a reputation as "one of the silent presidents of the Congress".

As Congress President, Bose devoted special attention to the appointment of a committee for national planning. Within three months of the conclusion of the Congress session, he convened a conference of Congress chief ministers in Delhi and, later, another conference of the Industries Ministers.

Bose had great faith that a strong and united Congress Party would stand four-square against a division of India.

The peace in the Congress lasted till Bose announced his decision to stand for election for a second term as President. The silent resentment blew into open hostility. Bose's decision to contest the election annoyed the Congress High Command, as the Working Committee was popularly known. Gandhi too was personally against Bose's re-election though he did not initially vocalise his opposition.

Bose was aware that his decision was unusual he justified it on grounds of ideological considerations rather than personal ambition. He was keen to give a Leftist orientation to the Congress. He thought that the Second World War was imminent in which England would definitely be involved and the Congress needed a definite leftist orientation in order to take maximum advantage out of the situation. In a statement issued on 21 January, 1939, he said: "The issue is not a personal one. The progressive sharpening of the anti-imperialist struggle in India has given birth to new ideas, ideologies, problems and programmes. People are consequently veering round to the opinion that, as in other countries, the Congress presidential election in India should be fought on the basis of definite problems and programmes so that the contest may help the clarification of issues and give a clear indication of the working of the public mind."

This statement met with innumerable counter-statements, rejoinders, counter-rejoinders, charge-sheets and accusations. Members of the Congress High Command asked Bose to withdraw in favour of their choice, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, who was actually Gandhi's nominee.

Bose flatly refused such a suggestion and said that their statement was 'tantamount to moral coercion'. Angry, he openly accused some of them of being desirous of a compromise with the British government on the federation issue which was why they were opposed to a Leftist like him. He said he was ready to withdraw from the contest if a genuine anti-federationist like Acharya Narendra Deva was elected unanimously as the President. This time the High Command refused. Neither was Dr Pattabhi Sitaramayya ready to withdraw in favour of Bose. In all this, the Left wingers were convinced that Gandhi and his followers had lost initiative and dynamism and lacked proper understanding of the international crisis which affected a golden opportunity to achieve India's freedom. Rabindranath Tagore, too, requested Gandhi to allow Bose a second term. Perhaps Tagore had also lost faith in Gandhi's methods and felt a modernist would infuse new life in the Congress. On 24th January, 1939, six members of the Congress Working Committee issued a statement opposing the re-election of Subhas Chandra Bose.

The battle had begun and the results were unexpected. Despite the stiff opposition, Bose won by a majority of over 200 votes, stunning his opponents and surprising even his friends.

Subhas' Victory: Gandhiji's Personal Defeat

This was an unprecedented event in the history of the Congress. It was the first time someone had ever challenged Gandhi as Bose had done and come on top. It was not really Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya who was defeated by Bose, not even the High Command but the Mahatma himself. Gandhi confessed as much: "The defeat is more mine that Sitaramayya's", he declared immediately after the election. Gandhi took the defeat personally and proceeded to slowly but surely push Bose away from the Congress. Bose regretted this attitude of Gandhi, "It grieves me to find that Mahatma Gandhi has taken it as a personal defeat. I would respectfully differ from him on this point. The voters were not called upon to vote for or against Mahatma Gandhi."

Gandhi was not prepared to take this lying down and he issued a statement after the election of Bose which gave rise to an undesirable controversy which ultimately led to a serious breach in the Congress:

"I must confess that from the very beginning I was decidedly against his election for reasons into which I need not go. Since I was instrumental in inducing Dr. Pattabhi not to withdraw his name as a candidate, the defeat is more mine than his. And, I am nothing if I do not represent definite principles and policy. Therefore, it is plain to me that the delegates do not approve of the principles and policy for which I stand. I rejoice in this defeat.

"Subhas Babu, instead of being President on the sufferance of those whom he calls Rightists, is now President in a contest election. This enables him to choose a homogeneous cabinet and enforce his programme without let or hindrance."

There was a challenge and threat cloaked in the advice when, at the same time he called upon those who felt uncomfortable in the Congress to get out of it. This advice was to be followed before long by almost all members of the Working Committee. Bose soon realised the heavy odds he had taken on. He said that he was upset to find that Mahatma Gandhi had taken the result of the presidential election as a personal defeat. In a press statement issued in February 1939, Bose said: "It will always be my aim and object to try and win Gandhi's confidence for the simple reason that it will be a tragic thing for me if I succeed in winning the confidence of other people but fail to win the confidence of India's greatest man." Bose's avowal of respect did not mollify Gandhi. He would not rest content unless he had turned the tables on the new President and compelled him to capitulate. Little did Bose anticipate that taking on the Mahatma would lead to his virtual expulsion from the Congress and, indirectly in his exit from the country itself.

Bose wrote in a pleading and almost prayerful tone long letters to Gandhi seeking his advice, help, guidance, and cooperation. Bose's letters and appeals had no effect whatsoever on Gandhi. He remained firm and unrelenting. In response to Bose's long letters, Gandhi's replies were brief and to the point. He told him that having won the Congress Presidential election on his own, it was for Bose to take the next step as he thought fit. He was free to nominate his own men to the Working Committee and otherwise conduct Congress affairs as he desired.

Bose met Gandhi at Wardha on February 15, before the Congress session at Tripuri which was scheduled to be held on March 7. The meeting instead of patching up their differences had the contrary effect of widening the gulf between them. The controversy centred around the nomination of the new Congress Working Committee. Bose pleaded with Gandhi to help him by ensuring the co-operation of the Old Guard. Gandhi asked Bose to go ahead with the appointment of his own men.

Bose was conscious of the disunity among the Leftists and he also knew about Nehru's opposition. It was clear to him that he could not function in these circumstances without the support of Gandhi.

It was decided to hold a meeting of the Working Committee at Wardha on February 22, 1939 to discuss the agenda for the Tripuri Session. But, unfortunately Bose fell ill and sent a telegram requesting the postponement of the meeting. This was interpreted by his colleagues as an expression of the President's lack of confidence and they decided not to cooperate with him. Soon twelve members resigned from the Working Committee with the knowledge and concurrence of Gandhi. Nehru did not resign immediately but he acted in a manner which gave the impression to everybody concerned that he was with the Old Guard. This left the President and his brother Sarat Chandra Bose alone on the personnel of the Working Committee.

The Tripuri Congress

On the eve of the Tripuri Congress, Gandhi was at Rajkot, thousands of miles away undertaking a vow of fast unto death to settle a dispute with its ruler. This diverted public attention from Tripuri. The chances of settlement between Bose and Gandhi were eliminated. Gandhi took the Rajkot Mission to display to the nation that he was not with Bose. Bose's attempts to find a way out of the stalemate created by Gandhi's followers in the Working Committee were sabotaged. Gandhi was conspicuous by his absence at Tripuri. But the old guard received inspiration from him and all other actions, they had his sanction. At least that was the impression of the delegates present at Tripuri. The twelve members who had resigned from the Working Committee were determined to create problems for Bose. Bose had obviously miscalculated the political situation in India at the particular time and had overestimated the role he would be able to play alone, opposed as he was by Gandhi and the High Command. Somehow he wrongly deduced that the Gandhi era had come to an end and it was up to him now to galvanise the nation.

Unfortunately, the President-elect fell seriously ill on the very eve of the Tripuri session and he travelled from Calcutta to Tripuri undertaking the long rail journey and defying his doctors. But at Tripuri he became so ill that he was not able to read his own address. As the President was too weak to attend the session, Maulana Azad took the chair. The Presidential address which was the shortest on record, was read by Sarat Chandra Bose.

But on reaching Tripuri he found himself too weak even to read his presidential address, let alone to guide the deliberations or to solve the difficulties confronting him. To make matters worse, Gandhi was absent. Nehru was ambivalent; the Working Committee having resigned was ranged against him and even those delegates including the Leftists who had voted for his re-election were having second thoughts about it.

When the All-India Congress Committee met on the eve of the plenary session, Bose lay in an invalid's chair on the rostrum with doctors in attendance. A member of the Working Committee moved a resolution expressing the A.I.C.C.'s confidence in the former Working Committee and urging the President to nominate the new Committee according to Gandhi's wishes. Bose held it to be inadmissible but expressed his readiness to put it before the Subjects Committee for consideration.

More than two hundred thousand people were present in the vast amphitheatre when the Tripuri session began on 10 March 1939. Bose was too ill that day to be present. His place was filled *pro term* by Maulana Azad and the presidential address—the shortest on record—was read by Subhas's elder brother, Sarat Chandra.

Whereas at Haripura Bose had covered the entire range of the Indian and international situation, at Tripuri he concentrated only on a few important issues. His main emphasis was on an immediate demand for freedom.

However, Bose's suggestion of an ultimatum did not find a place in the resolution on the national demand which was moved by Jayaprakash Narayan on the following day. This setback was followed by a worse one when G. B. Pant moved a resolution expressing confidence in Gandhi and, by implication, conveying lack of confidence in the President. The resolution also included a directive asking the President to nominate the Working Committee in accordance with the wishes of Mahatma Gandhi. This resolution, passed by an overwhelming majority, was a direct affront to Bose. Insinuations flowed freely that the President had feigned illness only to avert a vote of censure. The Tripuri session left a deep impact on Bose and it took him several days to regain his equanimity. He wanted to sort things out with Gandhi. However, an early meeting between them couldn't take place due to Gandhi's preoccupations at Rajkot and his own ill-health. Instead began a prolonged correspondence with Gandhi. Bose repeatedly pleaded, and prayed for reconciliation but Gandhi did not shift his stand. He insisted that Bose nominate his own men on the Working Committee, despite the Tripuri resolution to the contrary. Even the intercession of Poet Tagore on Bose's behalf could not change his mind. He sent him a curt reply: "Dear Gurudev,—I have your letter full of tenderness. The problem you set before me is difficult. I have made certain suggestions to Bose. I see no other way out of the impasse."

Nehru (to whom Bose was writing simultaneously) also pleaded with Gandhi. "Bose has numerous failings", he wrote to Gandhi, "but he is susceptible to a friendly approach. I am sure that if you make up your mind to do so, you could find a way out. I realise the importance of Rajkot but I think you will agree with me that the larger Congress issue is infinitely more important and is likely to govern all our activities." He continued, "Therefore, I would beg to you to address yourself to the latter, even at the cost of not attending to Rajkot affairs for a while. The idea that you may not attend the A.I.C.C. session at Calcutta is alarming. That simply means that conditions would go on deteriorating and that the Congress should go to pieces. I wish you could have met Bose. Quite apart from any feasible outcome of this visit, this could have been helpful in many ways."

Nehru's pleading had the desired effect and Gandhi agreed to visit Calcutta at the time of the A.I.C.C. session though he flatly refused to attend the session. Bose called on Gandhi immediately on the latter's arrival in Calcutta. They had a long discussion but Gandhi maintained his earlier stand and refused to suggest any names for the Congress Working Committee.

When the A.I.C.C. session commenced on 29 April, the President read out Gandhi's letter which had asked him to reach a settlement with his colleagues who had resigned from the Working Committee, confessed his failure to reach a settlement and tendered his resignation as President. "I regret very much", he said, "that since the Tripuri Congress I have not been able to announce the personnel of the new Working Committee. But this has been due to circumstances beyond my control. Owing to my illness, I could not proceed to meet Mahatma Gandhi. In lieu thereof, I started correspondence with him. This enabled us to clarify our ideas and viewpoints but could not bring us to a settlement."

Bose, therefore, considered it necessary to submit his resignation to the A.I.C.C.: "I feel that my presence as president at this juncture may possibly be a sort of obstacle or handicap in its path—for instance, the A.I.C.C. may feel inclined to appoint a Working Committee in which I shall be a misfit. I feel, further, that it may possibly be easier to settle the matter if it can have a new President. After mature deliberation, therefore, and in an entirely helpful spirit I am placing my resignation in your hands."

Bose said he was willing to withdraw his resignation only if his plan to introduce new blood in the Working Committee received favourable consideration. But his views were not approved by his former colleagues. Nehru withdrew his resolution and Bose's resignation became effective. Rajendra Prasad was nominated as the new President and the Bose-Gandhi battle that had raged bitterly for three months came to an end. Bose refused to remain a member of the Working Committee.

But whatever their political differences, their personal relations remained on even keel. In a letter dated 2 April 1939, Gandhi wrote "Though we have discussed sharp differences of opinion between us, I am quite sure that our private relations will not suffer in the least. If they are from the heart, as I believe they are, they will bear the strain of these differences." A few days earlier Gandhi had suggested that Bose should come to Delhi and stay with him. "I undertake to nurse you to health while we are slowly conferring."

Different Ways, Same Mission

Gandhi never questioned Bose's motives nor labelled him rashly as a fascist. He only emphasised that "Bose's ways are mistaken; they are not my ways". Replying to a correspondent who had asked: "Is not Subhas Babu right when he ascribes to the Congress High Command, including you, the reformist and the liberal tendency?" Gandhi wrote in the *Harijan* in January 1940: "Of course, he (Bose) is right. Dadabhai was a great-reformist. Gokhale was a great liberal and so was Pherozeshah Mehta. So, too, was Surendranath Banerjee. They were in their days the nation's tribunes. We are their heirs. What Subhas Babu in his impatience to go forward forgets is that it is possible for me to compete with him in the love for the land, in spite of our having reformist and liberal tendencies. But I have told him he has youth before him and he must have the dash of a youth. He is not held down by me or anybody else. He is not the man to be so held. It is his own prudence that holds him. And in that way, he is as much reformist and liberal as I am. Only I with my age know it, and he in his youth is blind to the good that is in him. Let my correspondent be assured that, in spite of our different outlooks and in spite of the Congress ban on him, when he leads in non-violent battle they will find me following him, as I shall find him following me if I overtake him. . . . But I must live in the hope that we shall gain our common end without another fight."

Nathalal Parikh wrote: "After listening to Bose at great length Mahatmaji said: 'Subhas, I have always loved you. You are keen on launching some mass movement. You thrive when there is fight. You are terribly emotional, but I had to think of several factors. I am an old man now and must not do anything in haste. I have the greatest admiration for you. Regarding your love for the country and determination to achieve its freedom, you are second to none. Your sincerity is transparent. Your spirit of self-sacrifice and suffering cannot be surpassed by anybody. But I would like these qualities to be used at a more opportune moment'.

Within three days of his resignation from the Congress presidency, he announced the formation of a new party called the Forward Bloc. Its object was "to rally all the radical and anti-imperialist progressive elements in the country on the basis of a minimum programme, representing the greatest common measure of agreement among the radicals of all shades of opinion."

Bose issued a statement after his resignation in which he promised to conduct himself as a loyal soldier of the Congress. The new party was not a rival of the Congress. It was to work 'within the Congress' like the Congress Socialist Party and similar other parties. Membership of the Bloc was open only to primary members of the Congress. The founder-President was Bose. Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar was appointed Vice-President of the new party.

The Forward Bloc, according to its founder, was a product of historical necessity. It was meant to give "vocal expression to the vague feelings, hopes and aspirations which stirred the masses." Bose set before the new party the three-fold task of winning over the majority of the Congress to its viewpoint, consolidating the Leftist forces and prevailing on the Congress to resume the national struggle.

The aim of the Bloc was an echo of mass sentiments—complete political independence and the establishment of a socialist state in India.

Its first all-India conference was held in Bombay on 22 June 1939. The main resolution of the conference laid down a programme for the party. Another resolution advocated intensive preparations for the launching of a struggle against British rule. Bose had become increasingly convinced that the war in Europe could break out any time. Ever since Tripuri he had been pressing for the synchronisation of an all-out struggle for India's freedom with Britain's involvement in hostilities.

Though the Leftist parties resisted to join the Bloc, Bose received an encouraging measure of support for the new party in Bombay. The Bombay conference resulted in the formation of a Left Consolidation Committee comprising the Forward Bloc, the Congress Socialist Party, the Radical Democratic Party and the National Front.

Bose called upon the Left Consolidation Committee to observe

9 July as a protested day against the A.I.C.C.'s resolution and more so to assert the inherent democratic right of Congressmen to ventilate their grievances. Gandhi promptly drafted a resolution for the Congress Working Committee disqualifying Bose as President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and also debarring him from being a member of any elective Committee for three years from August 1939.

The Mahatma and the Old Guard expelled him from the Congress.

Bose was unperturbed by his expulsion from an organization to which he had given the best years of his life. Neither defensive nor apologetic, he took the offensive against the Working Committee in a rejoinder issued on 19 August. The decision of the Working Committee, he said, "is the logical process of Right Consolidation which has been going on for the last few years and which has been accentuated by the acceptance of ministerial office in the provinces. The action of the Working Committee has served to expose the real character of the majority party in the Congress and the role it has been playing." He asked his Leftist followers to remain calm and collected in the face of provocation and to join the Forward Bloc in their millions so that "we shall be able to convert the rank and file in the Congress to our point of view, secure a reversal of the present policy of constitutionalism and reformism and resume the national struggle for independence with the united strength of the Indian people."

Bose's Activities after Expulsion

As predicted by Bose, the Second World War broke out with Hitler's invasion of Poland. India was roped into the war by a special Ordinance of the Governor-General without bothering to have a formal consultation with Indian leaders. The Congress stand was for the time being, to mark time, merely demanding the British government to give a clear outline of its war and peace aims and how these aims were to be made applicable to India.

Bose, who was an unexpected invitee to the meeting of the Working Committee, pressed the Congress Executive to define the Congress attitude to war. He strongly voiced his resentment of the Congress's passive stand and called upon it to give an immediate ultimatum to the British government. His plea was disregarded, and he convened an Anti-Imperialist Conference in Nagpur to bring pressure on the Congress. Britain's difficulty, he stated was India's golden opportunity and the time was ripe to launch an all-out struggle for freedom. The Congress, however, remained impervious to his statements.

Bose started a weekly journal in August to popularise the Forward Bloc. Named after the party, the journal emphasised week after week, the wisdom of an immediate and all-out struggle against the British government. In signed editorials Bose called upon the Congress and the country at large "to strike the iron while it was hot." In his very first editorial (6 August, 1939) he launched a fierce attack on the Rightist leaders of the Congress. "The slogan of unity at any price and under all circumstances", he wrote, "is a convenient slogan in the mouth of those who have lost dynamism and revolutionary urge. Let us not be led away by its fascinating appeal... The Right wing today wants nothing less than complete surrender on the part of the Left."

In another editorial (19 August) Bose replied to the accusation that the Forward Bloc was drawing into its fold opportunists and fascists: "To accuse the Forward Bloc of opportunism is amusing indeed. A member of the Bloc has to fight on two fronts—British imperialism and Congress bureaucratism—and has to suffer persecution at the hands of both. From the personal point of view he has nothing to gain but everything to lose. The line of least resistance and the path of opportunism, however, take one straight to the Rightist camp. And as for fascists, if this term indicates those who call themselves Hitlers, Super-Hitlers and budding Hitlers, then these specimens of humanity are to be found in the Rightist camp."

He was staunchly against a proposal made to hold a constituent assembly under the aegis of the British government to frame a new constitution for India. A true constituent assembly, he observed, "could come into existence only after the seizure of power... Only a provisional national government can summon a constituent assembly for framing a detailed constitution for India. This assembly which is now being proposed by the Congress Working Committee may be a glorified all-party conference, but it is certainly not a constituent assembly." This was a subject he frequently reverted to in the columns of the *Forward Bloc*.

Early in 1940, Bose launched a campaign to popularise his new party. He visited most of the principal cities and towns. The response almost everywhere was encouraging although Congressmen distanced themselves from him. Bose's criticism of their 'sacred cows'—spinning and prohibition had flicked them on the raw. Whatever their merit they could never become effective instruments of political struggle, he said in a statement. This criticism stung Gandhi to the quick. "The spinning wheel abides", he retorted in an editorial in the *Harijan* in which he also expressed his eagerness to have a compromise with Britain if it could be had with honour. Therefore, he was in no hurry to launch a fight with the British government on which Bose was so keen.

Bose reiterated his demand in his presidential address to the Anti-Compromise Conference at Ramgarh, Bihar. The Conference resolved to begin a country-wide satyagraha on 6 April against India's forced participation in the war and to make the final effort for the achievement of independence. Once the struggle began, there was to be no rest, no break, no Chauri Chaura as in 1922, no Delhi Pact as in 1931, no side-tracking of the struggle as happened in 1933 when the Harijan movement was launched.

Ramgarh thus was a milestone for the Forward Bloc. It also marked a parting of ways with other members of the shortlived Left Consolidation Committee. The Radical Democratic Party had already deserted the Bloc. It was followed by the Congress Socialist Party and the National Front (the Communist Party).

The government lost no time in arresting the leaders of the Forward Bloc including nine members of its executive. Bose, however, was left untouched. He organized the second conference of the Forward Bloc in Nagpur in June 1940. "The objective of the Forward Bloc", its main resolution explained, "will be the capture of political power by the Indian masses as early as possible and the reconstruction of India's national economy on a socialist basis." Curiously, however, the resolution reiterated that the Bloc would remain a party within the Congress. Bose gave a new slogan to the Forward Bloc at Nagpur: "All power to the Indian people, here and now." Before returning to Calcutta Bose visited Gandhi at

Sevagram and once again appealed to him to take over the leadership of the struggle for freedom for which it was the most opportune time. According to one eyewitness, Gandhi is reported to have replied: "Why do you think we cannot get better opportunities later on? Whether England loses or wins this war, she will be weakened by it; she will not have the strength to shoulder the responsibilities of administering the country and with some slight effort on our part she will have no alternative but to recognise India's independence. Both politically and morally, I feel, we should not be hasty in launching a movement at the present juncture. My conscience tells me to wait for better times."

Bose again told Gandhi that he just had to give the call, and the whole nation would respond to it. When Gandhi did not budge from his stand, Bose requested him at least to bless the movement to be launched by him (Bose). Gandhi again remarked that a movement at that juncture would be politically inopportune and morally unjustifiable. "But if your conscience tells you that this is the best time for striking out, go ahead and do your best. If you come out successful, I shall be the first to congratulate you." This was to be their last meeting.

Bengal at the time was suffering the backlash of the Ordinance Rule, the most offensive feature of which was the ban on public meetings. Bose defied this ban on 31 January 1940, at the Shraddhananda Park, Calcutta, but surprisingly he was not arrested. He then focused on the demolition of British monuments which were in profusion all across the country. Public attention was focused on the demolition of the Holwell monument, which had stood in Calcutta for 150 years as a reminder of the nation's slavery. Bose announced his intention to march on 3 July at the head of the first batch of volunteers to demolish it. But he was arrested on the previous day under Section 129 of the Defence of India Rules.

This was Bose's eleventh term of imprisonment. It was also to be his last because within six months he had put himself beyond the reach of the British government.

It was a disillusioned Bose who tried to settle down in Calcutta's Presidency Jail. He was bitter against the British government, the so-called popular ministry in Bengal, above all, against the Congress High Command for the petty rancour it had exhibited towards him. "The more I think of Congress politics", he wrote to his brother Sarat Chandra on 31 October, "the more convinced I feel that in future we should devote more energy and time to fight the High Command. If power goes into the hands of such mean, vindictive, unscrupulous persons when Swaraj is won, what will happen to the country?"

But, he was more concerned with his immediate problem. That is, to try and find an early end to his detention which he was sure was likely to drag on indefinitely till the end of the war. He could not allow that to happen. It was then that the seeds for what was to be described later as one of the most sensational escapes of history, started germinating. He began seriously contemplating about seeking German and Italian help to throw the British out of India.

His first and foremost task was to get himself released from the jail at the earliest and what better way than if he undertook a fast to death against his arbitrary detention? Gandhi had given a political validity to such a course of action.

After three long months of prayer to decide if he had strength enough to face death to ensure his release from jail—and eventual escape from India, he had convinced himself that he had a historic role to fulfil abroad and the only way to discharge it lay through martyrdom—a fast to death. His mind was finally made up and he wrote to the Superintendent of the Presidency jail: "There is no other alternative for me but to register a moral protest against an unjust act and as a proof of that protest, to undertake a voluntary fast."

He had taken a solemn vow to this effect and nothing would be allowed to come in the way. The fast would begin on 29 November, he declared. Three days earlier on 26 November, he sent letters to the Governor of Bengal and the Chief Minister recounting all the injustices and illegalities that had been heaped upon him and informing them of his determination to fast to death.

When the fast began on 29 November, as planned, the jail authorities seemed to have thought of feeding Bose forcibly. Getting an inkling of this, he warned them on 5 December that in the event of forcible feeding, he would have to think of some other way of committing suicide. Fearing the nation-wide agitation that would erupt in the event of Bose's death in jail, the government released him that very day (5 December) and interned him at his home.

After his release, Bose was terribly weak following seven days of hunger strike. Doctors advised his friends and relatives not to disturb him. Bose met only a few people.

Soon after his return, from jail, Bose issued a courteous retort to Gandhi who refused to accede to the public demand to withdraw the disciplinary action against Bose unless he (Bose) tendered his apology for his indiscipline. Bose's rejoinder was prompt: "At school I once read a poem on William Tell, the greatest hero of Switzerland: It ran

My knee shall bend, he calmly said
To God and God alone;
My life is in the Austrians' hand
My conscience is my own.

"I am not aware of any wrong that I have committed in my political career. Consequently my reply to the Mahatma will be on the above lines with a few verbal changes."

By the beginning of January 1941 the *modus operandi* of his get-away from Calcutta seems to have been finalised. Very few persons were taken into confidence about it. Bose cut down his interviews and meetings. Rumours were spread that Bose had decided to turn his back on mundane affairs and to follow the example of Aurobindo Ghosh, who, in similar circumstances, had retired to an *ashram* in Pondicherry, thirty years earlier. For some 40 days Subhas Bose was not seen outside his house and then one morning in the third week of January 1941, the world gasped at the sensational story that Bose had 'vanished' from his Calcutta home. The mystery was cleared when, about a year later in April 1942, they heard his voice speaking from Azad Hind Radio in Berlin.

After Bose's dramatic escape to Germany Gandhi had changed his opinion about Bose as is testified by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in his book *India Wins Freedom.* To quote Azad:

"Subhas Bose's escape to Germany had made a great impression on Gandhiji. He had not formerly approved many of Bose's actions, but now I found a change in his outlook. Many of his remarks convinced me that he admired the courage and resourcefulness that Subhas Bose had displayed in making his escape from India. His admiration for Subhas Bose unconsciously coloured his view about the whole war situation.

"This admiration was also one of the factors which clouded the discussions during the Cripps Mission to India... There was a news flash that Subhas Bose had died in an air crash. This created a sensation in India and Gandhiji, among others, was deeply moved. He sent a message of condolence to Bose's mother, in which he spoke in glowing terms about her son and his services to India. Later on it turned out that the report was false. Cripps, however, complained to me that he had not expected a man like Gandhiji to speak in such glowing terms about Subhas Bose, who had openly sided with the Axis Powers."

Gandhi had not the least hesitation in hailing Bose as "Netaji". In Gandhi's opinion the greatest and the most lasting achievement of Netaji was that he abolished all distinctions of caste, creed and class. Bose was not a mere Hindu or a mere Bengali. He was an Indian first and last. All those under him were fired with the same zeal, so that they forgot in his presence all distinctions, and acted as one man.

Gandhi visited the I.N.A. prisoners in their detention camps more than once. In an address to them he observed: "Netaji was like a son to me. I came to know him as a lieutenant full of promise under the late Deshbandu Das. His last message to the I.N.A. was that whilst on foreign soil they had fought with arms, on their return to India they would have to serve the country as soldiers of non-violence under the guidance and leadership of the Congress.

"Though the I.N.A. failed in its immediate objective, it has a lot to its credit of which it might well be proud. The greatest among its achievements was to gather together, under one banner, men from all religions and races of India, and to infuse in them the spirit of solidarity and oneness, to the utter exclusion of all communal and parochial sentiment. It is an example which we should all emulate".

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5

Forward Bloc: The Break from Congress

Bose resigned from the Congress Presidentship in 1939 and decided to form a Leftist Party. This establishment of the Forward Bloc in May, 1939, by Subhas Chandra was another important milestone in the evolution of his Leftism or radicalism. It was the practical version of his theory of the Samyavadi Sangha as it was conceived and its movement conducted largely on the line of his plan of Samyavadi Sangha. "The immediate objective of the Forward Bloc was an uncompromising struggle with British Imperialism for winning India's freedom." After Bose was expelled from the Congress, the Forward Bloc was declared to be a separate party at the second All India Conference held at Nagpur in June, 1940. The Forward Bloc stood for complete Independence. Subhas firmly declared, "Swaraj is our birth right. . . complete independence, not a whit less than that."

The Bloc intended to adopt a two-pronged method: national and international. It stood for a relentless and uncompromising national struggle against the British—a revolutionary struggle which would be non-violent in character—by employing all possible means to achieve this and forcing the British to transfer power to the Indian people. "It is for the Indian people to make an immediate demand for the transference of power."

The Bloc also represented an intelligent utilisation of the current international situation—exploitation of the international crisis of Britain to the advantage of India, to speed up India's freedom and thus submit India's 'National Demand' of Swaraj in the form of an ultimatum to the British. "How can we save our country from this political rut, utilise the international crisis to India's advantage and win freedom for ourselves—this is the supreme problem of the hour."

If necessary, the Bloc was even prepared to join hands with the Axis Powers—the enemies of Britain fighting her in the war against Britain. "....the Indian people should not be hampered by any philosophical notions like Gandhian non-violence or any sentimentalism like Nehru's anti-Axis foreign policy. The Bloc stands for a realistic foreign policy."

The Strategy of Forward Bloc

Thus, though the Bloc was fundamentally non-violent there was not a strict adherence to its non-violent principle like that of Mahatma Gandhi. Depending on the situation, it was even prepared to resort to an armed revolution or a revolutionary war. Freedom, it believed, was not given, but taken, and it could be taken by adopting any method that may be expedient for achieving its objective. "The Bloc stands for something positive and dynamic. There can be no going back for us—nor any marking time. The Forward Bloc has to move forward without a break, without a pause.

The creation of the Forward Bloc was a direct offshoot according to Subhas Chandra of the Congress's refusal to follow this method.

"Gandhism envisages an ultimate compromise with Imperialism for Gandhian Satyagraha (or Civil Disobedience) must end in a compromise." Compromise was unpalatable to Bose.

Bose had long nursed the dream of organising a new party in India which would not only give dynamic leadership in the freedom struggle but would also undertake the responsibility of post-war socio-economic and political reconstruction ever since the Third Indian Political Conference at Friar's Hall, London, on June 10, 1933. Subhas was invited to England by the Indian residents there to preside over the All Parties London Conference of Indians. In his presidential speech for this conference he put forward the proposal of "Samyavada Sangha". This was his concept about the new party.

Subhas Chandra strongly criticised the Gandhian policy of constitutionalism. "Congress ministries in the provinces were formed in 1937 and neo-constitutionalism reared its head in a menacing form within the Congress in 1938. Ever since then the main task of Leftism has been to fight this 'Frankenstein' created by the Congress itself. How to stem this drift towards constitutionalism, how to create afresh a revolutionary mentality among the people in place of neo-constitutionalist mentality....how to bring the Congress back to the path of uncompromising national struggle...these have been the main problems for the Leftists since 1938." And it was to give shape to these plans that the Forward Bloc was born. For "according to the Forward Bloc...a fighting mentality is necessary instead of a constitutionalist mentality."

The time was ripe when an uncompromising national struggle, according to Subhas Chandra, was the only path to freedom, whereas all roads of the Congress led to compromise. The only way to counteract this tendency was Left-consolidation —organization of "all progressive, radical and anti-imperialist elements...on the basis of a common minimum programme."

The concept of leftism was not new. The first experiment towards such Left-consolidation was made by the National Front and the Congress Socialist Party. But they failed to gather all radical forces under the name of a Left Bloc, and ultimately it petered out.

Subhas blamed their failure on their greater interest on propagating socialism—a futuristic concept whereas the need of the hour was the broadening and strengthening of the freedom struggle. Another factor which Bose attributed to their failure was that, they were more pseudo-Leftists than Leftists because of their constant vacillation, some of them even joining the Rightist Camp. The failure made him all the more determined to start a real Leftist party. The result was the Forward Bloc.

The Forward Bloc was a historical necessity. "All those who believe in progress and desire it, should therefore actively assist in this task of Left-consolidation, and should be prepared for the conflict resulting therefrom. For bringing about this Left-consolidation the Forward Bloc was born..." It was formed with the help of those Congressmen who were getting disenchanted with the growth of right-consolidation and were more interested in putting the pressure on the anti-imperialist front.

When the Bloc was formed, it did not want to antagonise the existing Leftist parties, nor did it want to undermine any of them. If the Bloc's proposal had been accepted and had all Leftist parties joined the Forward Bloc while retaining their separate identity—Left-consolidation would have been easily and immediately achieved and the Rightists would have been faced with a formidable force. But unfortunately for the Leftist cause, this also was not to be, because some of the existing Leftist parties themselves prohibited their members from joining the newly formed Forward Bloc.

Challenge to Gandhism

The Bloc stood for uncompromising national struggle, and "cannot accept a compromise with British Imperialism," while Gandhism stood for compromise. The latter espoused the cause of Federation and constitutionalism, while the former was deadly opposed to them. The Gandhian war-policy was unconditional co-operation with Britain in the war, without anyway embarrassing her at this critical moment, while the Bloc's policy was one of non-co-operation and exploitation of the international crisis of Britain to hasten India's freedom.

Thus the Forward Bloc was a direct challenge to Gandhism. Infact, it was the first real challenge to Gandhi's leadership after the death of C.R. Ḍas in 1925. Gandhians were openly hostile to it right from its very inception. The Forward Bloc became the spearhead of the Left movement in the country alongwith the Kisan Sabha and fought on two fronts—the Gandhi wing and the British government. The British perceived it as being politically more dangerous than the Congress and subjected it to severe persecution and harassment. Bitterness was bound to develop between Subhas Chandra and the Gandhite Congress, resulting in the Congress attack on the Forward Bloc and the expulsion of Subhas Chandra from the Congress.

"In most places I visited," he wrote, "I had no co-operation or assistance from the Congress organisation....in some places the attitude of the Official Congress was one of neutrality or indifference, but in others there was hostility open or covert," said Bose.

The Forward Bloc "stood for democratisation, radicalisation and reorientation of the Congress" as H. V. Kamath points out, "into a people's will to freedom."

In a statement issued by Subhas Chandra in his paper 'Forward Bloc', on 26-7-1939, declared his strong resolve to fight democracy not only within the Congress, but also outside it. And he sharply criticised the British imperialists for their anti-democratic crusade against the cause of India's liberty and freedom. "The Churchill Amery and Company", he wrote, "had dropped their hypocritical mask as champions of liberty and democracy. The horrible face of a soulless alien despotism had revealed itself to the Indian people in all its nakedness."

"The immediate duty of the Indians is therefore," he issued a statement from Kurseong on 8-6-1940, "is to stand up for the slogan 'All power to the people' and make an immediate demand for a provisional national government vested with full sovereign powers."

Thus the Forward Bloc had to fight on two fronts, the British front and the Right front, and in a way was a symbol of Leftism and anti-Rightism, respectively.

The Forward Bloc also stood for socialism—for a socialistic reconstruction of India in the post-freedom period, on the ruins of British imperialism "when Imperialism is ended the Socialist phase of our movement will commence."

But its idea of Socialism was not conform to any conventional standard. "It does not swear by copy-book maxims or text books of politics or economics. It is anxious to assimilate all the knowledge that the outside world can give and profit by the experience of other progressive nations. It regards progress or evolution as an eternal process to which India has a contribution to make."

Socialism as conceived by the Forward Bloc was a rational, academic and sociological concept. It "will build up a new India....on the basis of the eternal principles of Liberty, Democracy and Socialism." And doing so it would serve the cause of not only India but also of humanity and human progress.

There are some schools of opinion which say that the Forward

Bloc was some sort of a rebellion against the High Command, "an instrument of personal vendetta against the Congress." But this theory is contradicted on the following grounds.

The Forward Bloc was founded by Subhas Chandra to consolidate and unify the progressive, radical and anti-imperialist elements under one banner. Had it been possible, he confessed, under the Congress, it would have been the best course, and the creation of the Bloc would not have been then necessary. "...if it had been possible," he wished, "for all anti-imperialist forces to work together in spite of our differences." "The best thing for India," he wrote, "would have been for the entire Congress led by the Gandhi Wing to take up the policy advocated by the Forward Bloc. But that was not to be the case. "...Since September, 1938, Mahatma Gandhi had consistently urged that a national struggle was out of the question in the near future, while others, like the writer, who were not less patriotic than him, were equally convinced that the country was internally more ripe for a revolution than ever before and that the coming international crisis would give India an opportunity for achieving her independence, which is rare in human history. When all other attempts to influence Gandhi failed, the only way left was to organise the Forward Bloc and proceed to win over the mass of the people and thereby put indirect pressure on the Mahatma....The writer still remembers clearly the ...discussion which he had with Nehru in April, 1939, when he announced his desire to resign the presidentship of the Congress and organise a new party. Nehru argued that such a step would create a split within the Congress and would thereby weaken the national organisation at a critical moment. The writer, urged on the contrary, that one should distinguish between the unity which led to more effective action and the unity which resulted in inaction. Unity could be preserved superficially in the Congress only by surrendering to the Gandhi wing—but since the Gandhi wing was opposed to the idea of a national struggle, such unity if maintained, would serve to stultify all dynamic activity on the part of the Congress in future. If, on the contrary, a party with a dynamic programme was organised within the Congress now, that party might one day move the Gandhi wing and the entire Congress to militant action. Moreover, more critical times were ahead and a war was bound to break out in the near future. If one wanted to act in such an international crisis, then there should be a party ready to seize that opportunity. If the Gandhi wing was unwilling to play that role, another party should be formed at once—when there was still time to organise such party. If that task was neglected or postponed, it could not be done later, when the international crisis actually overtook India. And without a well-organised party ready to utilise the coming international crisis for winning freedom, India would once again repeat her mistake of 1914....It was in September 1938, that the writer for the first time realised that in the event of an international crisis, Gandhi would not seize the opportunity for attacking the British Government. It was then that he also realised for the first time that Gandhi regarded a struggle with Britain in the near future as outside the domain of possibility."

At no stage did Bose say that the Bloc was to be an alternative organisation to the Congress independent of it, rather it was to be an organization within the Congress, as it was resolved in the Forward Bloc Constitution drawn up on 22-6-1939.

What puts these doubts to rest once and for all is that the fight was to be waged in the name of the Congress. "The time has come for the Left-wing to differentiate itself from the right and proceed to consolidate itself—when this is done the Left Wing will secure a majority within the Congress and then proceed to resume the struggle for independence in the name of the Indian National Congress. This is the task of the Left-wing today. To fulfil this task the Forward Bloc has come into existence."

The Bloc would ready to immediately join the Congress sinking their difference if it would adopt a more dynamic and radical policy. "Let the Supreme Executive of the Congress," he wrote, "call upon the nation to resume the struggle. We shall then fall in line with them in that great and noble task. Unity within the Congress could be achieved on the basis of a dynamic programme of national struggle."

The stand of the Forward Bloc was one of national interest, national unity, and national freedom. The Congress was opposed to its stand was critical of it, and fought to convert it to its own way of thinking.

Subhas' Future Programme

Bose's Forward Bloc would not only fight for India's freedom, but would also take up the greater task of post-war reconstruction Gandhi had advocated in 1948, just before his death, that the Congress should not be allowed to continue as a political party. It should be converted into a Lok Sevak Sangh, a non-political institution with social service and constructive work as its only aim. Gandhi argued that the Congress "must be kept out of unhealthy competition" for power.

Bose's on the other hand, made a statement regarding the post-war preparedness of the leader for undertaking the gigantic responsibility of reconstruction which proved to be prophetic:

"If our leaders are not trained for post-war leadership also there is every possibility that after the conquest of power a period of chaos will set in and incidents similar to those of the French Revolution of 18th Century may be repeated in India. It should, therefore, be clear that the generals of the war time period in India will have to carry through the whole programme of post-war reform in order to justify to their countrymen the hopes and aspirations that they will have to rouse during the fight. The task of these leaders will not be over till a new generation of men and women are educated and trained after the establishment of the new state and this new generation are able to take complete charge of their country's affairs."[1]

The party would play a dual role. Lead a 'National' fight against great Britain, and secondly will lead an inter-class fight. During this phase of the struggle "all privileges, distinctions and vested interests will have to be abolished, so that a reign of perfect equality (social, economic and political) may be established in our country.

This party of the future would be composed of determined men and women, prepared to sacrifice their life for the cause of the nation. Self mould have to be submerged for serving the nation.

"It will be the task of this party to deliver India from foreign yoke. It will be the task of this party to create a new independent and sovereign state in India. It will be the task of this party to execute the entire programme of post-war socio-economic reconstruction. It will be the task of this party to create a new generation of men and women in India fully trained and equipped for the battle of life. Last, but not least, it will be the task of this party to lead India on to her honoured place among the free nations of the world."[3]

Bose's idea of the new party was a strong, centralised and well-disciplined All India Party, working in every section of the community. This party was to have its representatives working in the Indian National Congress, in the All India Trade Union Congress, in the peasants organisations, in the women's organizations, in the youth organizations, in the students organizations and all other organizations of importance to serve the cause of the nation. The central committee of the party was to exercise control over all these branches. This party was to act in cooperation with all the other like-minded parties in furtherance of the national cause. Bengal whole-heartedly supported the Forward Bloc and its anti-imperialistic programme. The Congress High Command took disciplinary action against many members of the Bloc, but this merely strengthened their resolve and increased their popularity among the masses. Gandhi himself drafted a resolution declaring Bose disqualified as President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee after Bose had led the Left Consolidation Committee to protest against certain Congress resolutions. Bose was also debarred from being a member of any elective Congress Committee for three years.

Unfrazzled by this decision of the Congress, Bose appealed to members of the Forward Bloc, to Leftists and to the public not to react to the provocation. He said that this had doubled his determination to stay on with the Congress and to work for the Congress and for the Country as a "servant of the nation". Bose did not let Congress xictimization dishearten him and he carried on the activities of the Forward Bloc till the time he was arrested and confined to prison without a trial in November 1940.

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6

A Dramatic Escape: From Calcutta to Berlin

The decisive role of Subhas Bose in the Indian national movement more than his party activities, or his triumphant success over the candidate sponsored by Gandhiji in the presidential election for the Tripuri Congress, is brought out by his fight against the British from abroad. This role has made him a legendary figure. From his sensational escape from India up to the tragic air crash at the end of the Second World War, his role in the movement was full of thrills and excitement.

Europe had entered the Second World War (1939-45). Eager to preserve its empire, England gave the lead and inspired her allies, the USA and the USSR to fight the fascists to save democracy in the world. She lured even her colonies in Africa and India to help her with men and material offering them in return in future their own freedom.

England was successful in seeking the help of the USA and the USSR as aligned nations.

The fascist nations, Germany under Hitler, and Italy under Mussolini, were more powerful to start with and they even controlled the aligned nations in the first stage.

When World War II broke out, the Indian National Congress demanded complete independence for India. Britain on her part, tried to get India to participate in the war, as she had got India to contribute troops at the time of World War I, again on promise of independence. After what they had been through, the Congress

Party, demanding immediate independence, would have none of it.

The Congress Party adopted on 22 October a resolution urging the Indian Ministries of all the provinces to resign from their posts immediately. Anti-British movement started in all the provinces. Soon, the Madras Ministry, the Central Ministry and the Bombay Ministry resigned *en masse*.

On 1 December the Congress Party leaders, Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Prasad, and the Muslim League leader, Mr. Jinnah, met. The Congress Party was split into two factions, Moderaters and Radicals. The former were against violence and favoured an attitude of compromise with Britain. The Radicals were led by Nehru and Bose.

Netaji was forced to resign as President of the National Congress after serving as such in 1938 and 1939. The disciplinary action taken against him was such that he was stripped of the right to be elected to any public office for a period of three years. Undaunted Netaji soon formed a "vanguard" group. He appealed to young people of the National Congress to launch a movement for immediate independence.

On 6 June 1940, Netaji made a sudden declaration, proposing to establish a provisional Indian Government with complete sovereignty, on the basis of the joint demand by the Hindus and Muslims. On 2 July Netaji was arrested at his house and imprisoned.

In January 1941, Maulana Azad, President of the Indian National Congress, was arrested and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment. Thousands more were arrested. Netaji went on hunger strike in prison, and injured his health. Cornered, the authorities sent him back to his home under surveillance to enable him to recuperate his health.

Though formally Bose was released from the prison, he was actually kept under house arrest. Sixty-two policemen guarded him round the clock.

Gandhiji also demanded an apology from Bose for his indiscipline, when he (Gandhi) was pressed by the public to withdraw the disciplinary action against Bose.

Bose was busy, as usual, after his release with his political activities and meeting people. He issued a number of statements on the Bengal Congress tangle. He criticised the role of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, for his undue interference in the Bengal Congress tangle and described him as "the Grand Moghul of the Bengal Congress."5

Bose Reported (Missing)

By the end of December 1940, he was convinced that it was no use remaining in India under the eternal threat of both the government and the dominant Congress Party. A Plan of escape from the country began to shape itself in his mind. He stopped meetings with people except with a few select ones. Earlier he had confined meetings to the morning hours only on the advice of his doctors, because of his ill-health.

He was under self-imposed seclusion in a room of his house on the Elgin Road. Dr. N.B. Khare, who met Bose early in January 1941, describes his condition under seclusion:

"I was taken into a room where Subhas Babu was lying on his sick bed. He had grown a beard and moustache, and there were articles of prayer and worship near his bedstead. Nearby was lying a copy of the *Gita* or some other scriptures, and on his bed was a rosary. Life-size portraits of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Vivekananda and other saints, adorned the walls. I was surprised when I entered. I thought I had missed my way and entered the ashram of a Sadhu, instead of the room of a politician."

"No one was allowed," says Dr Khare's account, "to enter this room unless he enjoyed the absolute confidence of Subhas Chandra Bose. It appeared that even servants and members of the household were not allowed. Food was served in a peculiar way. Plates of food were moved into the room through a window, by means of an aperture made for the purpose. From all this, it could be easily gathered that the atmosphere of this room appeared mysterious."

On the night of 16 January, 1941, at 9 o'clock, Bose met his family members at the "ritualistic dinner" including his elder brother Sarat Chandra Bose. " It was well past 1 o'clock when Bose dressed like an upcountry Muslim, came down the rear staircase, sat in the back seat and was driven away." The car was driven by his nephew, Sisir K. Bose, son of Sarat Bose, he and Netaji being its only occupants. Subhas had with him a suit-case, bedding and an attache case. From Elgin Road, they took the Grand Trunk Road and after a whole night's drive at top speed, they hid themselves at a certain place for the day and in the evening resumed the journey by car. The duo reached Gomoh, about 210 miles from Calcutta, from where Netaji got into a train for northern India, in the early hours of 18 January.

Bose's sudden departure from the smouldering political scene stirred great speculation. Gandhiji sent the following telegram to Sarat to know the reality: "Startling news about Subhas. Please wire truth. Hope all well".

A Perilous Journey

Bose, who got into a train at Gomoh, in the early hours of 18 January, 1941, alighted from the Frontier Mail as Maulvi Ziauddin, disguised as an insurance agent, with beard, in fez, astrakhan cap and baggy pyjamas, at Peshawar cantonment railway station, on 19 January.

At Peshawar there was an inordinate delay for a week for want of a proper plan and a reliable guide to escape to Kabul. Arrangements for his stay at Peshawar were made by Mian Akbar Shah, Forward Bloc leader of North West Frontier Province.

In the early hours of 26 January, 1941, Bose, as Ziauddin, a sick uncle of disguised Rehmat Khan, Bhagat Ram Talwar, the then member of the Kirti Kissan Party and the Forward Bloc of the NWFP, left Peshawar by car accompanied, in addition, by Abad Khan and a guide, en route the shrine of Sukhi Sahib at Adda Sharif in Afghanistan. Bose pretended to be dumb and deaf to hide his ignorance of Pushtu, tribal language of Afghanistan. They turned off the main Kabul road before Jamrud, the great fort which guards the entrance to the Khyber pass. Abad Khan was sent back to Peshawar from this point. The rest of the party continued its journey on foot and crossed the border. By 8 p.m. the party entered the tribal area and reached the village, Pishkhan Maina at midnight. They stayed there and started their journey in the morning on mules for some distance and later by trucks, passing by on the high way. Even the guide was sent back on 28

January, after crossing the border of Afghanistan. The party reached Jalalabad at about 10 p.m. on 28 January. The party stayed at the shrine of Adda Sharif on 29 January and "performed the customary rituals. The party took special guidance there for the next journey to Kabul from Haji Mohammad Amin, a fellow political prisoner of Bhagat Ram Talwar, in Peshawar jail. There was no passport system in those days between India and Afghanistan. On 30 January morning, they left Adda Sharif, reached Mimla in the late afternoon, Bud Khak, the next morning 31 January at 5 a.m. and Kabul at 11 a.m. The journey was hard, sometimes on foot, sometimes by tonga and at times by truck. They crossed the river Kabul, on a raft made of goatskins.

Next to Peshawar, Kabul was the second important halting station in the adventure of Bose. He had to stay in Kabul for about forty-six days (from 31 January to 17 March, 1941) for making further arrangements, to escape from Kabul to Berlin. "For forty-five days," wrote Uttam Chand, the host of Bose in Kabul, an Indian radio dealer and crockery shop owner in Kabul, with whom Bhagat Ram had acquaintance, "Bose Babu was with me,. .."

Both Bose and Bhagat Ram were new to Kabul. They continued their incognito roles as deaf and dumb Ziauddin and Rahamat Khan, respectively, to hide their identity from the Afghan police and the British agents. The day they arrived in Kabul, they were ready to drop with fatigue. The only safe residence near the Lahori Gate was a sarai, which was hardly fit for human habitation. A piece of bread dipped in tea was the only food for them on the first night.

The next day after their arrival in Kabul, they started their secret contacts with foreign Embassies in Kabul for asylum and help to escape to Europe. Subhas preferred first to go to Moscow, which was known for providing asylum to the revolutionaries and to socialists. This intention, he had made known first to Abad Khan at Peshawar and then, on a number of occasions, to Uttam Chand. By that time Bhagat Ram had located the residence of Uttam Chand. As it became difficult to protect themselves from the suspecting Afghans, they moved to the residence of Uttam Chand in the afternoon of 13 February. By that time, they had bribed the police with the gold watch of Bose, which was on the wrist of Bhagat Ram.

"The Russians", said Bose to Uttam Chand, "and the Germans have just concluded a non-aggression pact. Germany is at war with Britain. Russia is an enemy of Britain. This is the time to go to Moscow and do propaganda for Indian freedom." "Today", said Bose, "Russia is the only country which can help to liberate India. No other country will help us. This is why I do not want to go anywhere else but to Moscow."

Bose could not get permission from the Russian embassy in Kabul to go to Moscow. Then, Bose contacted the German Legation.

On 6 February, 1941 Bose went alone to the German Legation and met a Minister, Herr Pilger, who directed the former to try through Herr Thomas, a representative of Siemens in Kabul. On the 23rd, Herr Thomas directed Bose to meet the Italian Minister, Alberto Quaroni in Kabul. Bhagat Ram arranged the meeting in March at the Italian Consulate, between Bose and Quaroni which "lasted a whole night." Bose revealed to him his future programme of the freedom struggle, to form the "Government of Free India" to organize the Indian Liberation Army out of the Indian prisoners of war in Germany and Italy and to instal a wireless radio station to carry on propaganda for India's independence. All these meetings were a strictly-guarded secret.

It was during his stay in Kabul that Bose wrote his thesis "Forward Bloc—Its Justification."

Finally, the three governments of the USSR, Germany and Italy were in unanimity that Bose would travel across Russia on an Italian diplomatic passport impersonating a clerk at the Italian Legation in Kabul, Orlando Mazetta, on "a courier visa" issued by the Afghan government. Bose's photo was snapped for the original passport and his clothing was ready. Bose's suitcase was collected by the Italian on 16 March. Bose himself shifted to Crescini's residence (of the Italian Legation) next day. He handed over some documents, including the thesis, "Forward Bloc—Its Justification", and a letter to Sarat Bose to Bhagat Ram, to carry them back to India, and to hand them over to Sarat.

At dawn, on 18 March, Bose left Kabul by car for the Soviet frontier accompanied by a German engineer of the Todt organization and two others." The party travelled through the passes of the Hindu Kush, the Afghan steppes and crossed the Oxus at the Afghan frontier post at Pata Kisar and reached Samarkand. On the 20th, the party left Samarkand by rail for Moscow. Bose was very eager to go to Moscow. "My absolute preference", he said to Uttam Chand in Kabul, " is for Moscow".

The party flew on the 28th from Moscow to Berlin and arrived there on 3 April.

On 31 March, 1941, in the evening, Bhagat Ram handed over the documents to Sarat Bose in Calcutta, including even the "message to my countrymen", dated 22 March, 1941.

The news of the escape was deliberately broadcast to the world on 26 January, since his case was coming up for hearing the next day and also to get a head start over British police. There was an uproar by his own people and a frantic hunt was on even before enemy intelligence could realise what had happened. Rumours spread like wild fire throughout Calcutta about Bose's sudden disappearance. It was even suspected that he had been "secretly done away" with by government agents. Another theory was that disgusted with politics, Bose had left for the Himalayas.

Knowing Bose's bent of mind, many held the belief that Bose had left India to ally himself with foreign powers to pursue his quest for freedom. Japan has not entered the war then and it was assumed that he might have boarded a Japanese steamer which had left the Calcutta docks about that time. Speculations over Bose's disappearance continued for over a year until the world heard his broadcasts over the Azad Hind Radio though even then his exact whereabouts were not disclosed. To add to the mystery, Reuters reported on 28 March, 1942 that Bose had been killed in an air-crash near the coast of Japan.

"Bose's journey from Calcutta to Berlin (two months and eleven days) through a dragnet of British policemen, spies and informers ranks among the most sensational escapes of history".

7

An Affair with Germany

History has always tended to give a somewhat raw deal to the role of Indian revolutionary nationalists and Subhas Chandra Bose's alliance with the Axis powers in the long and chequered saga of India's freedom struggle. While the role of the Indian National Congress and its leader Mahatma Gandhi cannot be undermined, Bose, and others played an equally crucial part in accelerating India's freedom. They fought against the British both inside and outside the country. To achieve this they sought help from several foreign powers. The nature and content of assistance varied from time to time depending on the relations that existed between the assisting country and Britain. Bose left India in early 1941 to seek help from foreign powers for the liberation of India from the British mainly as a reaction to what he thought was the slow pace of the Congress High Command. The course he chose was not a new one. Earlier also the Indian revolutionary nationalists had joined hands with Germany and Turkey during the First World War for the same purpose. Germany had become the centre of international diplomacy in the first decade of the twentieth century. The Indian revolutionary nationalists who were carrying on their anti-British struggle from U.K., France and U.S.A. at that time regarded the position of Germany as ideal to the advancing of their ideological interests and considered it expedient to enter into active relations with her for removing the British from India.

During the 1930's, Hitler burst on the political scene of

Germany and who, on account of his Aryan superiority theory, frowned on the aspirations of the Indian nationalists. While Gandhi and Nehru openly denounced Fascism, Bose maintained a cautious approach towards the Fascist regimes. In the development of Nazism and Fascism, Bose saw potential allies against Great Britain. During his frequent visits abroad, Bose tried to be friendly with many European leaders.

Bose was no doubt disillusioned with Germany, but still believed in maintaining good relations with the Nazi leaders. This he thought would be politically advantageous for India's struggle for freedom in future.

With the Soviet refusal Bose was forced to turn to the Axis powers and decided to approach the Italian or German Legations. Bhagat Ram, who had accompanied Bose in his sensational escape from Calcutta, accordingly went to the Italian Legation in Kabul and told them of Bose's presence. The Italians were extremely pleased at this news—Bose's arrival came as a total surprise to them—and arranged a meeting at their summer residence outside Kabul at Paghman, where German representatives were also present. The Italians agreed to help and decided to approach the Russians for a visa for Bose to proceed to Europe via Moscow. But it was refused by the Russians. The Italians then prepared a Sicilian passport some days later for Bose under an assumed Italian name and sent this to the Russian for visa. The Russians said this would have to go Moscow for orders.

Meanwhile the German government also sent instruction to their ambassador in moscow to expedite the visa. The Russian delayed matters considerably, and Bose had to remain in Kabul during February and early March. The Italians became impatient due to this delay and were contemplating sending Bose by car to Iran and then to Turkey. At last the Sicilian passport returned with the visa. Bose decided to go to Germany despite the fact that the Italians were far more cooperative than the Germans during his stay in Kabul. But Berlin appeared to Bose as the stronger enemy of England as compared with Rome. Bose considered Berlin to be the more appropriate place for organizing Indian political propaganda in view of German military strength. The exchange of telegrams between Dr. Pilger, German minister in Kabul and the German Foreign Office proved that Nazi Germany took keen interest for the safe arrival of Bose in Berlin. On personal intervention of Schulenberg, the German Ambassador in Moscow, the Soviet Foreign Office reluctantly gave permission for Bose to travel on a transit visa. The visa was granted not in the name of Bose but in the name of Orlando Mazzota, an Italian citizen.

Bose left Kabul on 18 March for the Russian frontier in the company of Axis power officials. He reached Moscow on 31 March, 1941 found the Russians inaccessible for political talks and then flew to Berlin.

Three months after his sensational escape from Calcutta, Bose arrived in Berlin on 2 April, 1941 under the assumed name of Orlando Mazotta. On arriving, he met the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Dr. Ernst Woermann, at the Foreign Office. Bose explained the purpose of his visit, spelt out his political plans in Germany, and expressed the hope that German Government would cooperate with him. Coming to Berlin, he wanted to achieve three things: (1) to form a Provisional Free-India Government (2) a radio propaganda campaign aimed to create a revolt in India (3) an invasion by the Axis troops in India free it from British rule. Woermann assured Bose that his plans regarding India's freedom would be reported to the Nazi authorities. Dr. Adam Von Trott and Dr. Alexander Werth from the Information Department were to look after him. Reports Vyas, an associate of Bose in Germany, "the official German attitude was that of a probing nature with a kind of non-committed friendliness" towards Bose. For the time being he was to be given political asylum and to be treated as an honoured guest.

Bose wanted to establish a Free India Government in Europe and then obtain international recognition for it. He felt that this would incite a full-scale military and civilian rebellian against the British, in India.

Subhas Bose's association with the war-time German Government was purely opportunistic and formal in character, spurred on by his desire to exploit the war situation in favour of India. He neither admired Hitler nor National Socialism, amply proved by the fact that his closest collaborator in Berlin was Baron von Trott zu Solz, the man who plotted the assassination and overthrow of Hitler together with Count Stauffenberg and others on 20 July, 1944. Baron von Trott, as the head of the Indian Section of the German Foreign Office, was not only in daily touch was Subhas Bose, he was also his only friend and guide in Berlin.

Herr Adam von Trott zu Solz came from a well-known German family, and he was the first Rhodes scholar after World War I at Oxford in the nineteen thirties where he met a number of Indians. He became interested in the question of Indian freedom first at Oxford. Trott joined the German Foreign Service before the war and at the time when Subhas Bose arrived in Berlin, he was at the Anglo-American desk at Wilhelmstrasse. It was he who has launched Subhas Bose in Berlin and it was because of his report of the German Foreign Office that the Germans gave up their initial hostility to Netaji. Trott also used his association with Free India Centre as a cover for his anti-Nazi activities. During all this, Bose and Trott had become close and being almost of the same age and with similar political ideas, they become each other's confidents and mutually sympathised with the other's cause.

It was also Trott who ultimately helped Subhas Bose to escape from Germany when after the Battle of Stalingrad, Subhas Bose was aware that German collapse was near. He realised the futility of staying in Germany, which, he knew would be destroyed if the Germans lost the war. It was due to Trott that Subhas Bose was able to leave Germany because the Nazi Party bosses, hostile towards Bose's independent views, would not have hesitated to keep him as a hostage. Trott was convinced already in 1942 that the war was lost for Germany and that in the interests of Indian freedom movement, Bose's departure from Germany was highly desirable. Herr Adam von Trott zu Solz was hanged by the Nazis after a summary trial, together with the other heroes of German resistance. When Netaji arrived in Berlin, Germany was in the middle of the Second World War. In the whole of Germany, but more so in Berlin, every foreigner was a suspect. Bose was also suspected by the Germans. He was treated as an agent of Britain.

Bose had clearly shown that Indians did not want to be involved in Germany's quarrel with other countries or with her own internal quarrels. The Germans, i.e. the German Foreign Office accepted this viewpoint and never insisted Bose that support them in their war with other countries. Neither Bose nor the Azad Hind Radio ever defended by speech or in its broadcasts, the policy of the National Socialist Party in continental Europe or elsewhere. The work done by the Indians under Bose in Germany was based on the firm understanding that without being ideologically involved in the National Socialist doctrine, the Indians in Germany could promote the cause of Indian independence, because Germany happened to be at war with England. This understanding (both written and oral) remained the only basis of the relationship between the Free India Centre and the German Government.

For about twenty-two months (From 3 April 1941 to 8 February 1943), Berlin was the headquarters of Bose, who through his Government of Free India, the Indian Liberation Army and the Indian Radio Station in Germany became a legendary figure, especially to the Indians.

Indian Legion in Germany

Along with the propaganda programme, Bose organized the Indian revolutionary army, the Indian Legion in Berlin to utilise it in his freedom struggle. The Government of Germany planned and decided, earlier in 1940, to organise an Indian Legion "with the idea of employing it in the disturbed regions of North-West Frontier Province of India.

At the invitation of Bose, Harbich, the first German Officer of the Indo-German Commando Group, met him (Bose) in the Hotel Excelsior and discussed in detail the recruitment and training of the unit. Bose visited Meseritz often and was inspired by the Indo-German Commando Group, towards the organization of a bigger independent Indian Legion in Germany.

Bose also met Dr. Adalbert Seifriz and discussed the problems that were impaling the organization of the Indian Legion. Soon a close friendship sprang up between the two. "After the war, Dr. Seifriz founded the Indo-German Society which in certain ways resumed the work of the Indian Information Bureau established in 1929 in Berlin by the Indian National Congress at the initiative of Jawaharlal Nehru."

There were no less than 10,000 Indian prisoners of war in the camps of Germany and North Africa. Bose visited in December 1941, the Annaberg Camp, in Germany, very often, where the Indian prisoners of war were kept. He met them individually, gave a patient hearing to their hardships and sympathised with them and later, after taking them into his confidence, invited them to the Indian Legion to fight for the Indian freedom. Within four months 300 Indian prisoners of war joined the Legion, unmindful of the non-commissioned officer's dissuasion, as Bose announced promotions, purely on merit and not on previous ranks. The number doubled in another six months.

The first batch of the Legion completed its training at the Frankenberg camp (on 26 December, 1941). The POWs underwent further higher training at Koenigsbrueck, the permanent training camp of the German Army, near Dresden.

A military honour was conferred on Netaji, in the autumn of 1942, by the Indian Legion of about 3000 men. On the occasion, Col. Satoshi Yamamoto, the Military Attache of the Japanese Embassy in Berlin, and a friend of Bose, was present. All the members of the Indian Legion, at the end of the occasion, took an oath as soldiers of Free India led by Lt. General Krappe, in the presence of Bose and Yamamoto, under the Indian banner of tricolour with the springing tiger embossed on it. The soldiers touched their officer's sword as they spoke the German words: "I swear by God this holy oath, that I will obey the leader of the German state and people, Adolf Hitler, as commander of the German Armed Forces, in the fight for the freedom in India, in which fight the leader is Subhas Chandra Bose, and that as a brave soldier, I am willing to lay down my life for this oath."

"Your names", Bose addressed the soldiers, "will be written in golden letters in the history of Free India: every martyr in this holy war will have a monument there."

By December 1942 the Indian Legion grew up to the size of a regiment with four battalions of about 4000 men.

Seifriz referred, in his preface to the book, *Netaji in Germany*, by N.G. Ganpuley, to the contribution made by Netaji to the Legion. The intellectual basis for the growth and success of the Legion was created by Subhas Bose.... He was very anxious to see preserved in the Legion traditions of the cultural and political past of his country.... He was the great idol of the Legion... A meeting with Subhas was a special event for the German training staff. . .

Though the Indian Legion was not directly employed in the fight for freedom, it proved to be a great source of inspiration for the freedom fighters in India. Through the Indian Legion, Bose infused militant nationalism among the Legionaries and protected the interests of other POWs and Indians in Germany, Italy, France and other places.

Bose was able to maintain unity out of diversity of gods, religions and customs of India. "In India we have many gods and religions but everything is only Jai Hind here,"—the legionaries used to say.

Bose's speeches mesmerised the legionaries.

The legionaries used to sing patriotic songs, e.g.,:

"Hame sukh ko ab bhool jana padega
Watan ke liye dukh uthana padega
Aiy! Azad Hindiyon utho, kamar bandho
Watan loot rahe hai bachana padega."

("Now we shall have to forget all the worldly pleasures and face sorrows for the sake of our country. Oh, free Indians, awake and gird up your loins. We shall have to save our motherland which is being looted by foreigners.)"

The Free India Centre received regular advances is the form of loans from the German Government, to be repaid when India would be freed. The monthly grant was Rs. 18000 ($1,200) in 1941, which rose to Rs. 48,000 ($3,200) in 1944. The expenses of broadcasting and the maintenance of the Indian Legion were entirely borne by the German Government. Bose repaid the first instalment, half a million yen, before independence, in 1944, through the German Ambassador in Tokyo, with the knowledge of the Japanese government. This amount was part of the subscriptions collected by him from the Indians in South-East Asia.

The Azad Hind Radio

The Free India Centre or the Azad Hind Centre, organised on 2 November, 1941, did not have the backing of a written agreement between Netaji and the German government. Hitler's headquarters had given him permission for carrying on activities proposed on the civil side. The Free India Centre in Berlin started functioning with the full status of a diplomatic mission. Given top priority was the task to develop and expand daily radio broadcasts to India. The Special India Division of the German Foreign Office provided the necessary technical facilities for organization of the radio-broadcast programmes. Except for the technicians the broadcasting programme of the Azad Hind Radio, was completely manned by Indians. The political talks were prepared by Indians under the guidance of Bose and were exclusively on Indian subjects. The programme was transmitted on a "special independent wave-length and was on no account to be mixed up with any German broadcasting programme."

The texts written by the Indians were never supposed to be censored. But Queling, who worked as a scientific Assistant gives a version contrary to that given by Ganpuley. "There was to be no censorship of any kind from the German side and there was to be no dictation about the subjects to be selected... This arrangement was strictly adhered to, without a day's break, till the end of the War."

In the meanwhile, the Japanese army was notching up success in the War. These developments in the Far East greatly uplifted Bose's spirits as he thought that his long cherished desire of emancipating India was going to be realised very soon by the success of Axis Powers in the war.

The Japanese occupation of Singapore on February 15, 1942, provided the opportunity to Bose to come out openly to address the Indian people on 19th February.

"The fall of Singapore means the collapse of the British Empire, the end of the inequitous regime which it has symbolised, and the dawn of a new era in Indian history."

As the war intensified in the Far East so did the programmes of the Azad Hind Radio. In the beginning the programme led the German authorities to give three hours time to the Free India Centre on the transmission line for its Indian programme. The German representative in Kabul reported that the broadcasts from the Azad Hind Radio were very popular in India and they were eagerly listened to by the people of all shades of political opinion.

Alarmed by the unexpected and brilliant success of the Japanese army in the war the British Government tried to appease Indians, and Sir Stafford Cripps who was regarded "as the right man for the right job" was sent to India in March 1942, for carrying out negotiations with the Indian leaders. He had come with the promise of Dominion Status, after the end of War, Bose went on the radio on the 11th March "to attack the British policy of deception and warn the Indian people."

"A victory of the British Empire means a perpetuation of slavish status of the Indian people. The emancipation of India is possible only through a complete collapse of Britain. Therefore, those Indians who are working for the British are working against the interests of their father-land. In other words, they are traitors. Indian patriots will fight not only against the British but also against their henchmen. Everyone can easily realize how stupid it is to believe in compromise with the country which is bound to disappear from the surface of the earth some day. The British Prime Minister Churchill promised, in his recent speech before the Parliament, to give India the status of a Dominion as soon as possible after the war is over. Acting on his instructions, Cripps is in India to unify all the different ways of thinking among the Indian people and figure out how best to appease them politically. But it is a delusion to think India still wants the status of a Dominion and that there is any Indian who believes in what Britain has promised. Indians know full well that the existing division among Indians themselves has resulted from the machinations of the British and that as long as they remain in India, they will continue to pursue their policy of 'divide and rule'. Churchill will soon realize that it is no longer possible to keep Indians on their side by a piece of bread they are going to throw to the Indian people. The British Empire is going the way of those many empires which have long since been ruined. From the ashes of Britain will emerge a unified India."

His message to the Indian Independence League was a source of great inspiration to all those who were working in South East Asia for the freedom of India:

"From what I have learned during my eighteen months' experience abroad, Japan, Germany and Italy are our allies in our fight against British Imperialism. However, the independence of India must be achieved by the Indian people themselves. We believe in the necessity of resorting to arms in the final phase of our independence movement. When this final phase comes, nobody will be able to prevent me from going back to India. I am confident that India will never fail to win freedom during the course of this war. Freedom of India means expulsion of British and American Imperialism, which is also the goal of the invincible Armed Forces of Japan. I pray for the success of this meeting which, I am sure, marks a milestone in our fight for victory."

He urged Indians to extend all help to the Axis Powers to bring the British Empire on its knees. Bose pointed out that the only reason why Britain wanted to drag India into the war was to exploits it to the maximum. He elaborated that the enemies of Britain were the friends of India and the defeat of Britain in the War would lead to the emancipation of India.

British Propaganda

The paid propagandists of Britain called him an enemy agent and a Nazi collaborator in order to alienate his following in India. Bose replied:

"Britains paid propagandists have been calling me an enemy agent. I need no credentials when I speak to my own people. My whole life is one long, persistent, uncompromising struggle against British Imperialism, and is the best guarantee of my bonafides. All my life I have been the servant of India. Until the last hour of my life I shall remain one. My allegiance and loyalty have ever been and will ever be to India alone, no matter in which part of the world I may live..."

Bose kept himself abreast of all developments in India and addressed the Indians over the radio on all important issue. His main aim was to influence public opinion in India and to counteract against the vile British propaganda. The "revolutionary fire of his words made an instant and lasting impact on the thousands who assembled to listen." His broadcasts from Berlin were greatly responsible for the failure of the Cripps Mission "to woo the Indians" mind by promise and concessions."

Bose, ahead of his times as usual, had predicted the failure of the Cripps' Mission. He had rightly anticipated that the Indian struggle for freedom would take a violent turn after the failure of this Mission. The debacle of this Mission led the Government to resort to oppressive and coercive methods to root out all opposition. There was a "rapid and widespread increase of ill-will against Britain and a growing satisfaction at the success of Japanese arms."

The Congress could no longer maintain its passivity and as urged by Bose in his speeches from Berlin, it expressed in unequivocal terms its demands for immediate independence. Gandhi also demanded "Complete and immediate orderly withdrawal of the British from India." Further he said:

"I am convinced that the time has come for the British and the Indians to be reconciled to complete separation from each other."

Subhas: Submission

The fundamental differences between Bose and Gandhi dissolved after the famous 'Quit India' movement was launched on 6 July, 1942. Bose had requested Gandhi to give an ultimatum to the British to leave India, failing which the Congress should start a mass movement. Gandhi's refusal forced Bose to leave India to organize an armed revolt against Britain from abroad. In 1942, the Congress, under the leadership of Gandhi was speaking the same language which was continuously repeated by Bose. He expressed his satisfaction on this resolution:

"There is no doubt that the Congress resolution came nearest in expressing the wish of the vast majority of the Indian people. It also brought the Congress fundamentally near the stand always taken by the writer, namely, that the destruction of British power in India was the sine qua non for the solution of all India's problems, and that the Indian people would have to fight for the achievement of this goal."

The Quit India movement symbolised a thumping victory for the principles which Subhas had been strongly advocating since the Calcutta Session of the Congress in December, 1928. Gandhi interpreted the Congress resolution as "open rebellion," and his decision to give an ultimatum to the British marked a radical departure from the earlier stands taken by him. The Quit

India Movement, though suppressed ultimately, shook the foundations of the British Raj as nothing had done before. For the first time Gandhi subordinated both non-violence and Hindu-Muslim unity in independence:

"I, therefore, want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had... The mantra is 'do or die'. We shall either free India or die in the attempt; we shall not live to see the perpetration of our slavery."

The Quit India Movement was a vindication of the stand of Bose as Gandhi gave the ultimatum to the British to leave India "with bag and baggages."

The Quit India Movement marked the climax of the freedom struggle and was the last and final mass movement for a total and complete emancipation of India. Bose had always urged for a synchronisation of the freedom struggle fought within India and from abroad by Indians with the help of friendly countries.

In his radio broadcasts Bose appealed to the Indian people "to continue and intensify and fight for freedom in the face of the increasingly repressive measures of the British."

Keeping his ideological convictions in mind, he recommended a programme of action to be put into operation in India to give the mass movement new dimensions of operational strategy and effectiveness to bring the administrative machinery to a stand still.

Bose described the Quit India Movement as a non-violent guerrilla war-fare and instructed the people to employ the tactics of dispersal. "In accordance with the principles of guerilla war, we should also be as mobile as possible and should move continuously from place to place. The authorities should never be able to predict where our activities will emerge next... The object of this non-violent guerilla campaign should be a two-fold one. Firstly, to destroy war production in India, and secondly, to paralyse the British administration in the country. Keeping these objects in view, every section of the community should participate in the struggle."

The Free India Centre received reports from Kabul that the Azad Hind Radio and the National Congress Radio another radio station started to give expression to the militant viewpoint of the

Indian National Congress were widely listened to by the people in India and the instructions of Bose as regard to the methods of the non-violent guerrilla warfare had great impact on the conduct of the movement.

Bose's broadcasts had greatly influenced the public opinion in India which not only resulted in the rejection of the Cripps' Mission but also the violent upheaval during the Quit India Movement.

Meeting with prejudiced Hitler

Even though it was more than a year since Netaji arrived in Germany, in March 1941, Hitler had been refusing to meet him. The common theory was believed to the Hitler's fear of alienating Britain permanently. This reason lost credibility in March 1942, after the failure of Hitler's air blitz over Britain and of the Hess mission. Besides, the German Army's staggering losses on the eastern front during the winter of 1941-42 had put a dampner on Hitler's hopes of ever reaching India's border to threaten Britain's Indian Empire. The need for veiled respect towards the British was on longer there in March 1942.

Around this time, the British Cabinet decided to send Sir Stafford Cripps to India to came to some sort of a settlement with the Indian leaders in order to win their cooperation in the war. So far, since his arrival in Germany, Netaji had maintained a silence about his attitude towards Britain unless Germany resolved to help in India's liberation. But with this new development, Netaji knew that freedom, if it came with Britain's agreement, without an armed confrontation, was bound to be on the basis of the partition of India as demanded by the Muslim League. And freedom at this cost would annihilate all their efforts. Hence on 11 March, one day before Sir Stafford Cripps left for India, he openly made a series of broadcasts denouncing Cripps proposal and urging the Indian leaders to reject it.

The Cripps Mission failed and it was believed in Germany that it was due mainly to Netaji's broadcasts. As a result, his prestige rose considerably in Berlin. It was at this point that Hitler, working anew at Bose, agreed to meet the latter, and to explain to Netaji in simple words that his further stay in Germany would be a waste of time because Germany did not hope to reach India's border "before a year or two". He wanted to advise Netaji that it would be better for him to go to the East to obtain Japan's assistance.

The historic interview took place on 29 May, 1942, at the Reichs Chancellary in the presence of Foreign Minister Herr von Ribbentrop, Secretary of State Keppler and Ambassador Hewal. Dr. Paul Schmidt, Hitler's official interpreter, acted as the interpreter. The meeting with Hitler marked the burning point in Bose's stay in Germany.

Contrary views and reports abound regarding this famed meeting. As against this official version of the Netaji-Hitler interview preserved in the German Government archives, there is Dr. Alexander Werth's short account of the event which is vastly different as regards the content of the report and also the tone of the exchanges between the two men. Dr Werth has written: "First, Bose requested Hitler to explain what exactly he meant by the insulting remarks he had made about India in his book *Mein Kampf*. Hitler, it seems, refused point blank to discuss this question. After this rather bad beginning, Bose put the question whether Germany would be ready to make the declaration so often asked for by him on the question of India's independence after the war. To this question also Hitler replied by saying that according to him India would not be able to rule herself for another 150 years. He then led Bose to a map of the world and pointed out to him how far the German war front was from the Indian frontier. It was because of this, Hitler said, that an immediate declaration could not be of any practical value. The interview ended, in fact, in total failure. It also ended almost dramatically. For, as was reported by Adam von Trott who acted as the interpreter for Bose, at the end of the conversation Hitler asked Bose how and what practical action he would take when the situation seemed to be so desperately unfavourable for India. On hearing this remark, Subhas Bose lost his patience and told von Trott in English: 'Please tell His Excellency that I have been in politics all my life and that I do not need advice from anyone."

On the objectionable words about India published in *Mein Kampf*, Werth has said that Hitler bluntly refused to discuss the question with Netaji. But one of Netaji's most trusted Indian colleagues, Mr. M. R. Vyas, has stated, "In reply to Netaji drawing his attention to the ugly remarks about India in *Mein Kampf*, he immediately expressed his regrets, saying that these were based on earlier misconceptions. He agreed to delete the relevant remarks from all future editions and dictated notes to this effect for appropriate action by his publishers."

Dr. Schmidt's report written in the form of a summary of the conversation, contains about 2600 words in English. Adding to these the same number of words in German, the interview which lasted about an hour accounted for more than 5000 words spoken in English and German.

The demand for this declaration had been the predominant theme of the memoranda, letters and verbal representations. But now he felt there was no longer any need for it because he had now concluded that Germany was sure to be defeated in the war. Shortly afterwards, he told his German friend Admiral Canaris, Head of the *Abwehr* (German Counter Intelligence Section): "You know as well as I do that Germany cannot win this war. But this time victorious Britain will lose India."

Netaji was not interested in these belated explanations. He opened the talk by thanking the Fuehrer and his Government for all the facilities extended to him and immediately lunched into an explanation about why it was imperative that he go to the Far East, and requested facilities for the journey.

Hitler fully agreed with this view and was ready to help. Cautioning him against undertaking a hazardous air journey without informing the German government, because it might compel him to a forced landing in British territory, he said "He (Bose)", "was too important a personality to let his life be endangered by such an experiment. One had to chalk out a safer path for him. A Japanese submarine had, at that time, arrived in Europe, and could take Bose along in case it was returning soon. Otherwise, he (the Fuehrer) would place a German submarine at his disposal, which would take him to Bangkok."

Thailand's mention indicated that Hitler had understood the difficulty which Netaji was having in persuading the Japanese to act quickly. Bose, he said, should negotiate with the Japanese "not only for influencing events in his motherland but also for restraining the Japanese themselves from making psychological mistakes by appropriate advice."

On the possibility of Japan betraying India's trust Hitler's assurance to Netaji, according to N.G. Ganpuley, was: "Your Excellency, I am prepared to tear up my tripartite agreement with Japan if she should refuse to honour your wishes in respect of India's independence."

Netaji, in his reply, requested Germany's moral and diplomatic support for India, so that she did not have to depend on Japan alone. In the course of the discussion, Netaji aired his old complaint against Hitler: the latter's remark about the Indian people being of an inferior race who would never be able to free themselves from the British yoke, in his autobiography *Mein Kampf* Hitler seems to have given a tactfully evasive reply though he does not deny categorically that it might have been a mistake.

At the time of parting, the Fuehrer extended his best wishes to Bose for the success of his journey and plans.

The meeting on 29 May, 1942, between Netaji and the head of the German State had the effect of recognition by both sides that the Free India Centre's programme expanding its work, with armed action in view, had come to an end.

Bose had realized the futility of staying on in Germany.

"After long and complicated discussions with the respective Military Attaches at the Italian and Japanese Embassies in Berlin and Rome". Bose's travel programme to East Asia was agreed upon and kept as top secret.

On 26 January, 1942, Netaji addressed the meeting of about six hundred people in Berlin. His address to the Indian Legion, on 28 January, 1943, was the last one in Germany.

Goodbye Germany!

On 8 February, 1943, early at night Bose left Berlin, after giving complete instructions and handing over charge of the Free India Centre and the Indian Legion toA.C.N. Nambiar. He was accompanied by Keppler, Alexander Werth and A.C.N. Nambiar, by train from Berlin to Kiel, where Abid Hassan, a former engineering student and one of the first civilians to join the Indian Legion, travelled by the same train in a special compartment and joined them.

In the early hour's of 8 February, 1943, Bose left the port, Kiel, accompanied with only Abid Hassan, as planned earlier by the German "Submarine. (U-190) of type IX with a speed of 18 Knots on the surface and 7.5 Knots under water", and of which Werner Musenberg was the Commander. The submarine sailed through "the English Channel, Bay of Biscay, then down the Atlantic Ocean along West Africa to the Indian Ocean below South Africa and finally to the south of Madagascar where", on 28 April, 1943, Netaji and Hassan were transhipped in a rubber boat to a Japanese submarine (I-29), which had left Penang (Malaya) on 20 April, 1943, of which Teraoka was the Captain and Izu, the Commander.

This was the end of the second phase of the freedom struggle of Subhas Chandra Bose, the first being in India (from 1921 to 16 January, 1941).

After the departure of Subhas Bose from Germany, the Free India Centre, three radio transmitters and the Indian Legion continued to function until the collapse of Germany (9 April, 1945). The radio team had to shift its transmitters, during the Allied raids, from Germany to Hilversum in Holland, in the summer of 1943, to Helmstedt in August 1944 and to Leisnitz in Saxony in 1945.

Bose had made it clear to the German Government to employ the Indian Legion only in or near India against the British empire, indicating how averse he was to British imperialism. In all this, he maintained his dignity as an equal to the German authority.

Subhas Bose was a unique freedom fighter who blazed his own path to achieve the freedom of his motherland. His sensational escape from India and his maximum suffering in the cause of the nation made him a hero of the national movement. His tremendous organizing capacity was ardent in his arrangement of broadcasts from the three Centres in Germany to India in order to rouse the Indians against the British, while his militant nationalism is apparent in his organising the Indian Legion in Germany.

Since not much help was forthcoming from government he decided to leave Germany for South East Asia.

8

Netaji and Emilie Schenkl: Love Blossoms Amidst the Thorns of War

Like Netaji's death, his marriage, too, remained a controversial issue for years, specially as the latter had taken place in a foreign country, to a foreign lady, an event completely devoid of any fanfare. Bose's contemporaries in India were not aware for a very long time that the fiery revolutionary had indeed got married secretly. It was only when the letters exchanged between Emilie Schenkl and Netaji came to light, that the speculation has been finally laid to rest.

"Just one thing more before I close this long letter. For your life, never pray for any selfish object or aim. Always pray for what is good for humanity—for what is good for all time—for what is good in the eyes of God. Pray in a nishkama way."

Subhas Chandra Bose to Emilie Schenkl.
30 March, 1936.

"Then suddenly I had the foolish idea of 'Bleigiessen". It is done in this way. You melt on a spoon some metal (lead) and when it is melted, you pour it into cold water. At once it becomes hard and gets shaped. According to the shape, you foretell the future of the one who has poured his spoonful of metal. I had a very funny thing, looking like the map of India."

Emilie Schenkl to Subhas Chandra Bose,
1 January, 1937.

Subhas: One-Idea Man

In 1936 the destiny of a young Austrian woman became inextricably linked with that of a country she was never to see. "India is my first love and my only love, that is what he told me", Emilie Schenkl recalled in the course of a conversation with Krishna Bose in her Vienna home in 1971. Subhas Chandra Bose, according to his close friend and political associate A.C.N. Nambiar, was "a one-idea man...singly for the independence of India". But he went on to add, "I think the only departure, if one might use the word departure, was his love for Miss Schenkl, otherwise he was completely absorbed...He was deeply in love with her, you see. In fact, it was an enormous, intensive love for her that he had."[1]

Subhas Chandra Bose and Emilie Schenkl met for the first time in Vienna in June 1934. In the preface dated 29 November 1934 to his book *The Indian Struggle* she was the only person he mentioned by name. "In conclusion," he wrote, "I have to express my thanks to Fraulein E. Schenkl who assisted me in writing this book and to all those friends who have been of help to me in many ways."[2] It was then that their correspondence began as Subhas Chandra Bose, then exiled in Europe, travelled to India on being informed of the critical illness of his father. In his first letter from Rome on 30 November, 1934 Bose wrote, "I am always a bad correspondent—but not a bad man I hope." The former, was proved wrong when Bose corresponded dilligently with Emilie Schenkl whether he was in prison or hospital, home interned or in the midst of whirlwind political tours. One hundred and sixty-two letters were written between 1934 and 1942.

They had already become close friends in 1934. Emilie Schenkl had not only worked with Bose in Vienna, but had also accompanied him on trips to Badgastein and Karlovy Vary.

During much of 1935 they had the opportunity to see each other in Vienna and nearby health resorts. Not many letters were written then. The letters resumed in early 1936 as Bose felt well enough to go on another European tour. He wrote several interesting letters from Ireland, where he had quite a few meetings with Eamonn De Valera. In March 1936 Bose decided to return to India in defiance of British warnings that he would not be permitted to remain at liberty if he did so. Emilie Schenkl joined him briefly at Badgastein prior to his departure.

On 29 March, 1936, Bose wrote from the ship Conte Verde, "There are many things I want to write to you about—but I shall write in a disconnected way—so please read this letter carefully." He wrote three letters in three consecutive days at the end of March 1936 which marked the beginning of nearly twenty months of geographical separation. All of the letters between 8 April, 1936 and 15 March, 1937 had to pass through police censors. Of these the first two were written from Arthur Road Prison in Bombay and Yeravda Central Prison in Poona, eleven from his internment in Kurseong and five as a prisoner in Medical College Hospital in Calcutta. Eight letters written by Emilie Schenkl during this period have also survived. One of Emilie Schenkl's letters (which has not been found) caused a break in his 'monstrous life' and took his "thoughts away to Vienna for a while. The letters of this phase touch on a variety of topics, including Austrian politics, books, music, Bose's fascination with Budapest and Prague, jokes in Viennese cafes, spiritually and concern with each other's fragile health.

Bose promptly informed Emilie Schenkl of his release on 18 March, 1937. "My freedom means", he wrote, "that I can move about freely and that my correspondence will not be officially censored—though, of course, it will always be secretly censored. In his letter of 25 March, 1937 he promised to "try to write a few lines every week", a promise he kept during the next few months as he corresponded regularly from Calcutta, Lahore, Dalhousie and Kurseong. He expressed his emotions in a couple of undated letters in block characters that he sent in the spring or early summer of 1937. In the first of these he wrote, "I HAVE BEEN LONGING TO WRITE TO YOU FOR SOME TIME PAST—BUT YOU CAN EASILY UNDERSTAND HOW DIFFICULT IT WAS TO WRITE TO YOU ABOUT MY FEELINGS. I JUST WANT TO LET YOU KNOW NOW THAT I AM EXACTLY WHAT I WAS BEFORE, WHEN YOU KNEW ME. NOT A SINGLE DAY PASSES THAT I DO NOT THINK OF YOU. YOU ARE WITH ME ALL THE TIME. I CANNOT POSSIBLY THINK OF ANYONE ELSE IN THIS WORLD... I CANNOT TELL YOU HOW LONELY I HAVE BEEN FEELING ALL THESE MONTHS AND HOW SORROWFUL.

ONLY ONE THING COULD MAKE ME HAPPY—BUT I DO NOT KNOW IF THAT IS POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, I AM THINKING OF IT DAY AND NIGHT AND PRAYING TO GOD TO SHOW ME THE RIGHT PATH."

In another letter (in German) of 4 November, 1937 again written in block characters Bose informed Emilie Schenkl of his forthcoming trip to Europe and asked her to make arrangements for them to stay in Kurhaus Hochland in Badgastein. Bose knew by now that he would be President of the Indian National Congress in 1938. On 26 December, 1937 Subhas Chandra Bose secretly married Emilie Schenkl.

Bose's many letters written during 1938 give a fair idea of his hectic travel and work as Congress President. Several of the letters were written on trains as he travelled across the length and breadth of the subcontinent.

Following his illness at the time of the controversial Tripuri Congress, Bose writes on 19 April, 1939: "I wish I could go to Badgastein... But I do not know if I can spare the time and the money." He seemed to be quite content with his decision to resign as Congress President. "India is a strange land," he wrote on 15 June, 1939, "where people are loved not because they have power, but because they give up power. For instance, at Lahore I had a warmer welcome this time than when I went last year as Congress President." He asked Emilie Schenkl on 21 June, 1939 to "please wait till August—probably I will come then to Gastein."

The outbreak of war in September 1939 laid waste all these plans and also interrupted Bose's correspondence with Emilie Schenkl. The next letter which Bose wrote to Emilie was after nearly two years, and is dated 3 April, 1941, the day after his arrival in Berlin following his dramatic escape from India.

Emilie Schenkl joined Subhas Chandra Bose in Berlin in the spring of 1941. For the rest of the year and the first eight months of 1942 they lived together at their home on Sophienstrasse in Berlin. A daughter Anita was born to them in Vienna on 29 November, 1942. Bose came to Vienna to see his daughter in December 1942. Emilie joined him in Berlin in January 1943, prior to his departure for East Asia by submarine on 8 February, 1943. Subhas continued to send her radio letters from Asia, but these were taken away by officers of the British Army during their occupation of Vienna at the end of World War II.

An Emotional Letter to Brother

Before setting out on his hazardous submarine journey Subhas wrote out a letter dated 8 February, 1943 in Bengali to his elder brother Sarat: "I am again embarking on the path of danger, but this time towards home. I do not know whether I shall see the end of this road... I have married here and have a daughter. In my absence please show them the love you have given me all my life." After this letter reached Sarat Chandra Bose's hands, he visited Vienna in 1948 with his wife Bivabati and three of his children—Sisir, Roma and Chitra—and warmly welcomed Emilie and Anita into the Bose family. Finally, four and a half decades later, in June 1993 at another family gathering the privacy-loving Emilie finally agreed to have her letters from and to Subhas Chandra Bose brought before the public eye. Emilie was a woman of tremendous courage, fierce independence and great dignity who provided a fresh and deeply rewarding dimension to the life of one of India's most controversial leader.

Napoli
28-3-36

Dear Miss Schenkl,

After a safe journey I arrived here this morning and shall soon be on the high seas. I send you my warmest greetings and also to your sister. Best regards to your parents. Please tell them that I got their letter while in Gastein. I posted an article on "Balkans after the War' from Villach which you must have got by now.

Aufwiedersehen
Yours sincerely
Subhas C. Bose

'Conte Verde'
29.3.36

Dear Miss Schenkl,

There are many things that I want to write to you about—but I shall write in a disconnected way—so please read this letter carefully. We are now one day's journey from Naples. The sea is fairly calm—thank God! As I am now old, I cannot stand a rough sea, which I could do when I was a young man. It is beautiful and sunny—the blue sky above—the darker blue of the ocean all around us and in front of us—an unending expanse of water.

When I crossed the Italian frontier there was no trouble at all. They looked at me and did not even ask me to open my boxes. At Villach, I stopped at the Bahnhof Restaurant for three hours and then finished the article which I posted to you. I think there was somebody watching me there—but I did not care, as I was busy writing. If that letter did not reach you, then they must have stolen it, because I posted it myself in the station post-box. There is not much to report about, after I crossed the frontier. I posted the pencil for you and registered it. And I spoke to Dr K. about your cuttings. The journey to Naples was all right and we left Naples at 3 p.m.

Life on a boat is comfortable, so far as animal comforts are concerned. Plenty of food to eat—in fact, too much. You can begin with bed-tea--then breakfast with plenty of courses—lunch at 1 p.m. with plenty of courses—then afternoon tea with cakes, etc. and last, but not least, evening dinner at 7.30 p.m. In the first class, the food is even richer and between breakfast and lunch they also give you soup and sandwich. You have concert in the afternoon and a cinema-show at night. Last night we had a cinema show. Then you can have a daily bath of course and there is besides a swimming pool which you can visit when the weather is favourable. For killing time, you have deck sports. Today, there was a shooting competition and the Italian passengers showed remarkably good aim. They were shooting at a piece of wood thrown into the air automatically by a machine. In the first class there is also a gymnastic room.

My cabin-mates are an Indian and an Afghan. There are about six Indians on board. The boat is full of Italians but I think it will be empty at Massawa. We shall reach Port Said on the 30th or 31st March and I shall post this letter there.

I am glad that the sea is not rough. Generally the Mediterranean is rough in winter and the Arabian Sea is rough in summer. Only in spring (March, April, May) and in Autumn (October and November) one can find both the Mediterranean and the Arabian seas calm. The Red Sea is never rough—except when there is a storm—but it is awfully hot. I wonder how we shall find it now. They have started putting the electric fans in order, in anticipation of the Red Sea.

I hope you have done all the work that I had left for you, without bungling. There was really so much to do that I cannot blame you, if you did bungle. The two important things were—my statement to the press and the doctor's letters, all to be sent by airmail.

If I can manage, I shall send you (under another cover perhaps) notes for your further articles for the Hindu. If you could get additional information and rewrite the articles, it would be good. Try to remain in touch with the friends in Prague—he will be able to help you in journalism.

If you ever happen to travel to the East, choose Spring or Autumn. And if you choose spring, you should have summer clothes to be used after Port Said. On the boat, European ladies wear even 'beach-pyjamas' when they move about on the deck.

This morning in the ship's wireless newspaper (a daily paper) there was a piece of wireless news about Vienna. One Dr Ochsner(?) belonging to the Phoenix Insurance Company was found dead on the banks of the Danube. There was also the news about De Valera's eye-operation in Zurich and a forecast of the German election which is to be held today.

I have with me some surplus lira which I *may* send you in this cover. I hear that in Port Said or in Bombay I shall get a very bad rate if I change. I may send you 100 to 150 lira in paper notes. If you get it, you may get it changed into Austrian money soon. The lira will probably be falling—so you should change it soon.

I think I shall write to the Times Book Club subscribing to the daily Times for about one month more—i.e. till the end of April. You may read the paper and send it to me once a week. Send only the inside four pages—but please don't make the cuttings. If there is anything important for your work, please make notes. You should collect notes and cuttings separately for each Balkan country —so that when you write an article, there will be no difficulty in picking out the information you want.

And then, take care of your health. At Gastein, the food was not very good. I hope that at home you are now feeling better. It is spring, so that you will not feel the cold any more and I hope the cough will disappear. I hope the gall-bladder trouble will disappear.

I beg you to be careful about your diet. *If you are, then you may avoid an operation*. Otherwise they will cut you open one day.

Regarding my letters in English, you may perhaps consult the Prague friend *if necessary*. You know that I trust him in political matters. Keep Patel's letters carefully. Should you find in that bunch, any of my letters, please keep them separately. And if you find the release order at once mail it *registered* to my brother but do not put any 'absender.' (Re. Bengali letters, see note below).

I have spoken to Dr K. about taking some of my clothes to India and he has agreed. I think it would be best to divide my clothes into three boxes—two small boxes and one big box (leather). Mathur and Katyar can probably take one box each without difficulty. The more useful and expensive clothes should be packed into the small boxes. If they can be put into one box—all the better. If Mathur agrees, it would be much better—because he will come straight to Calcutta. I shall of course pay for the expense from Bombay to Calcutta for the baggage and any incidental expenses in Europe. But you must use your common sense and see that the transport charges are not too much. If they are too much, then it is no use sending them to India. Dr K. told me that he could manage to bring them to the port from Vienna, without any extra charge. The extra charges, if any, for Europe or Bombay—should be paid by you—at least you should offer to pay on my behalf. If either Dr. K or Mathur does not accept payment from me, that is a different matter—but I feel that I should offer, because they are students after all.

About my books, you must arrange with Dr V. or Mrs F.M. as you think best, please make a note of all books that are lent, and see that they are returned.

I have with the American Express the sum of 5 dollars. I shall ask them to pay this money in pounds to you. They will probably charge a commission. Please pay the commission yourself and take the money in pounds. You will have to pay out of this amount the sum of one dollar to New Leader for my subscription. The balance of 4 dollar you should keep. Perhaps you should better keep this in English money so that if you went to England, you could use it. If you change it, please ask Dr Sen if he could give you a better rate. Even if you do not go to England, English money would sometimes be useful.

I shall send with another letter to you, a letter to New Leader. Along with that letter, enclose one dollar and send it to Nambiar by airmail. Ask Nambiar to register my letter and the one dollar to the address I give. I am also writing to Nambiar now. The idea of sending it by airmail to Nambiar is on account of the fact that an airmail letter is more safe than an ordinary letter. The idea of sending it registered from Prague is because it will be delivered safely in London (As you know we cannot send money in a registered cover from Austria, but we can send it from Czechoslovakia).

Please read the New Leader and send it to India. Please send both the New Leader and the Times to my home address—1 Woodburn Park, Calcutta—by Book Post—Drucksache.

Re. Bengali letters let Dr Sen read them in your presence and translate them soon afterwards. Don't send them to Asoke. Destroy them after translation.

The big leather box is impossible to carry in a compartment in the train. I must be booked as 'gepack' and that means expense. You must wait for the time when some one will agree to bring it at his own expense, or if the transportation charge is not much empty the box as much as possible and offer him the box to carry his own clothes and things. I would only like to have the box—because it is useful and belongs to my brother. The white cotton things in the box you may give away. The typically Indian shirts which cannot be used in Europe—you may send with Karyar or Mathur *or destroy them, as they are of no value*. Pick out the useful and valuable things from the big box and put them into the other two boxes for Mathur or Katyar to bring with them. Please send the skating and skiing boots, as I want to keep them as a remembrance. Now I have written enough for one letter. Give my best regards to your parents and greetings to your sister. I wish you the best of luck and I hope and pray for the best. Please tell your parents that I request them to allow you to do journalism.

Yours sincerely
Subhas C. Bose

PS If there is anything else to write, I shall write another letter before reaching Port Said—but to another address.

S.C.B.

'Conte Verde'
30-3-36

Censored and Passed
Supdt. of Police
Darjeeling

Vienna
8.9.36

Dear Mr Bose,

When I reached Vienna on the 5th inst. I found your letter, dated the 12th August. Through some mistake it came late. It was posted in Darjeeling on the 13th August and reached Vienna on the 29th August. And it was not redirected to my country address, therefore the delay.

Well, now we are back and not feeling at all well. We miss the open-landscape badly and feel like prisoners in the middle of houses. When one is used, for 9 weeks, to the country, one feels unhappy in a town. Besides, you know how full of beggars Vienna is now-a-days. In the country one does not see so much poorness together as one sees in a town. We would all have liked to stay for some days more in Pollau, but school begins on the 15th inst. and my father does not yet know what to begin with my sister so we had to return in order to get information about other schools. Up till now my sister was in a Realgymnasium (high-school). But my parents think it better to take her out and send her to some house-holding school or something like that. And this needs consideration.

I have not been able to go to town in order to find out about the gramophone records, as I had a lot of work to do when we came here. First of all I began to destroy all my old newspapers of which I had piles. Now I have emptied my drawers a little and have now space for new rubbish. I am also now arranging all my photos in order to paste them in an album because I have not done this for 2 years. This year I took about 60 snaps and some are very good.

I am so sorry to hear that your health is still not all right. Have the doctors been able to cure this throat infection? It may probably be due to the wet weather of which you write. Because I know from my own experience that during winter, when it is damp and wet I get easily an infection in the throat. But in Pollau

I got a bad cough again owing to rapid change of climate. I am still not all right, but at least somehow better.

Very kind of you that you will send me the Modern Review. I have not yet got it. No, thanks, there is no magazine I would like at present, because I do not know which is most interesting. But if you have any spare copy of any old one, of which you think it would interest me, please send it to me. I shall be thankful. Have the snaps come out well which you wrote of? I think, with a good camera one can take snaps even in bad weather. I took some snaps with another camera which I borrowed from a shop, and they came out very well. I would like to change my camera for a 'Kodak', because they are much easier to handle and cheaper in use, because the 'roll-film' is cheaper than 'Pack film' (the one I have is Packfilm).

I have not yet seen Schwester Elvira, she has gone to Salzburg with a friend and will return only about the middle of this month. I have not yet seen any of my friends in Vienna. But I hope I shall do so next week. Mrs Hargrove is not back in Vienna, she is in Gastins, I think. I rang up Mrs Vetter but found only her husband at home. Mrs Miller seems also not to be at home, because I could not get a connection. Sen is the whole day out and I spoke only once on the phone with him.

As far as I remember, you told me once that you have written two books in Bengali. I forgot the titles. Were these not philosophical subjects which you treated? I suggest now that you should translate these books into English, that also people outside Bengal may be able to read them. I would be very interested to read these two books, but as I know only 3 words in Bengali (how are you, good day, what is your name), I think I could never read your books. Trust for you it would be some work to while away your time. What do you think about it?

I have now a very bad task before me—searching for a job. My mother is the whole day grumbling with me because she is of opinion that I am alone responsible for not having a job. As if a job were to be found on the street now-a-days! Well, my nerves are rested now, the battle with the job can begin! I have been a bit down with my nerves when we went to Pollau but plenty of fresh air and sunshine have done me good.

You will wonder to hear that I even made some excursions into the mountain this year. But I must say this year I did not at all feel tired when climbing. I have lost in weight again and I think therefore climbing was more easy for me.

This moment Schwester Elvira rang me up, she came back this morning. She asked me to give you her kindest regards and was very sorry to hear about your throat infection.

Have you got the picture postcards and snaps which I sent under separate cover by ordinary mail from Pollau?

I received a letter from my friend Ella and she enquired about you and also begged me to remember her to you.

From my parents and 'little' sister (who is nearly grown up now) I shall send you best regards.

Also best greetings from myself as well as best wishes for your health.

Yours sincerely
E. Schenkl

PS: I shall send you in my next letter the information about the duty on tea and shall also look for the book which you asked me to send to you. If there is anything else I can do for you, please let me know and I shall gladly do what is possible.

E.S.

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1 Woodburn Park
or
38/2 Elgin Road
Calcutta
8-2-38

Dear Frl. Schenkl,

I reached Calcutta on the 24th January and was at once thrown into a whirlpool of activity. I cannot tell you how grieved I was to hear of the death of your dear father. I have been wondering how it could happen so suddenly. I thought you would write to me in details—but you have not. Please let me know at once how such a tragic event could take place so suddenly. Perhaps you have been too busy yourself to write to me.

I had to go out of Calcutta on the 28th for our Provincial

Conference. I returned on the 31st and left again on the 1st February to attend the Working Committee (Party Executive) meeting at Wardha. From there I returned only yesterday. At Wardha, I met Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru and all the big leaders. I shall leave again for Haripura Congress on the 11th inst. I am now trying to make time to write my speech.

I sent you two telegrams from here on the 24th January—one about my arrival and the other about your father's death. I then wrote a registered letter on the 25th (or perhaps 27th) January. Did you receive the letter intact? Please let me know by airmail.

Please write to me also as to what you are doing now-a-days.

I hope you are getting the Patrika regularly. I shall renew its subscription in time. Do you want the Orient?

I shall be at the Congress from the 13th to the 22nd inst. From there I shall go to Bombay and I shall then return *to Calcutta by the end of this month.*

Please write to me as regularly as you can. How are you? My regards to your mother and yourself. Greetings to Lotte.

Yours Sincerely
Subhas C. Bose

All India Congress Committee
In the train
26-5-38

Dear Frl. Schenkl,

I wrote to you the other day from Bombay. Perhaps I shall not be able to write to you again for some time—so I am writing to you in the train. It is 36 hours journey from Bombay to Calcutta. I was sorry to learn from your last letter that you were not keeping well. I am afraid you are not taking proper care of your health. I understand that you have had considerable strain since your father's death and too much work at home. I hope you will now visit the doctor and get thoroughly cured of all vour troubles. Why don't you take a week's holiday (or two weeks') and go for rest-cure? Please correspond with Von Have on my behalf. I think I have left his address there. Will you kindly send it to me? Ich werde von Hause Ihnen etwas geld schicken—Dass ist nur fur Ihre gesundheit.Warum besuchen Sie den Arzt nicht? Wie geht es

Ihnen jetzt? Wie viel bekommen Sie von dem Telegraphenamt? (Translation: I shall send you some money from home—that is only for your health. Why don't you see the doctor? How are you now? How much do you get from the Telegraph office.—eds.)

I sent you some Bombay papers when I was in Bombay. Has Amiya's friend visited Vienna yet? Wann wollen Sie nach Ibren Hause Kommen? [Translation: When will you come back home?—eds.]

I have already subscribed to Orient for you and shall arrange to send Patrika also. Please let me know how you spend your time now-a-days. What is your sister doing now-a-days? I am afraid that the pension your mother is getting now-a-days is not sufficient for the family. Please send me news of Mrs Miller and Mrs Vetter. Some time ago you wrote to me saying that Mrs. Vetter was again very nice to you and had made up with you. But in your last letter you tell a different story. Why don't you make up with her? Please give Mr Faltis and Mrs Faltis my best regards. How are the boys getting on with the association now? If you have any spare time, please let me know. I may then make some suggestions as to how you could prepare for your future career so that you may get quick promotion. Please make a note of my telegraphic address—SUVASBOS, Calcutta. I shall have to come to Bombay again in June. Ich denke immer an Sie. [Translation: I think of you always —eds.] I am fairly well.

Yours sincerely
Subhas C. Bose

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9

From Germany to Japan: The Sensational Submarine Adventure

Japan entered the Second World War in December 1941. Within months, it demolished the strongholds of Western Imperialism. Bose had already lost interest in working in Europe to further the cause of India's freedom and he now began to look forward to Japan for support for Asia's resurgence. After the Battle of Stalingard, Bose was sure that German collapse was nearer and he realised the futility of staying in Germany. He started to put in motion all efforts for going to East Asia. The Japanese Government had already made it known via Rome that they were ready to issue a declaration on Indian independence jointly or independently.

By February 1942, the Japanese had taken over the countries in South-East Asia and were helping the Indian nationalists in the formation of Indian National Army (INA). Both at the Tokyo and Bangkok Conferences, the name of Subhas as the Indian leader who should be invited to lead the Indian Independence Movement in East Asia was put forward by the Indian nationalists and the request was conveyed to the German Government. In a swift diplomatic manoeuvre, the Japanese Prime Minister Tojo made an official declaration on 16 February, 1942, in which he made an appeal to the Indian people to cooperate with Japan "to make themselves free from the ruthless despotism of Great Britain and contribute towards the creation of Co-prosperity sphere". By making this declaration, Japan made two things clear: one, it had ignored its Western allies and secondly the declaration was directly addressed to the Indian people. Bose was pleased with the announcement.

With the Japanese advance and her victories in South East Asia, the German Foreign Office also became aware of the vital importance of India in the final outcome of the war. The documents throw light on the keen interest which Germans showed in the activities of Indian nationalists and their alliance with the Japanese for the liberation of India. In Thailand, Indian nationalists with Japanese help were doing their best to establish a strong anti-British base and were keen to have Bose as their leader in East Asia to launch the movement. The request to Bose to come to East Asia came at the right time. Bose was aware that his success in Germany was dependent on a German victory in Russia and the willingness of the German Government to issue a Free India Declaration. Both prospects seemed bleak. On 23 May, 1942, Bose expressed his desire to Dr. Ernst woermann, the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs go to East Asia. According to him, the action of "Japan against England in India signifies a turning point in the Indian history. Therefore his place is in the vicinity of India." From Berlin he was restricted in his influence on the developments in India. Another point was that Indians in East Asia were not happy with Rash Behari Bose and were unwilling to accept him as their leader. Woermann was doubtful about the Japanese welcome to Bose. Bose assured him that his discussions with Oshima, the Japanese Ambassador in Berlin, had given him encouraging signs that he would be welcomed by the Japanese Government. Finally he let Woermann know that he had already spoken with Mussolini regarding his desire to got to EastAsia and the latter was willing to let him fly to Rangoon in an Italian aircraft. The German Foreign Office was divided on the issue of Bose's decision. Woermann was in favour of Bose's departure, while Ribbentrop was hesitant to take the risk of sending Bose by an Italian aircraft. Though he agreed with Bose's desire to go to EastAsia. Ribbentrop, persuaded him not to travel by an Italian aeroplane as it was not safe. Germany would willingly make a submarine available to him which would take him direct to Rangoon. Ribbentrop gave Bose this assurance when he met him on 27 May, 1942. He also mentioned that both Hitler and he himself considered Bose "as the prominent and only true national leader of India" and appreciated his desire "to be closer now to his people",

Germany and Italy were willing to do everything possible for him to proceed to East Asia. However, despite prolonged correspondence between the Japanese and the Germans, no decision could be taken about Bose's departure to East Asia.

The Japanese had decided to invite Bose after the Bangkok Conference where Rash Behari Bose proved to be a weak leader. This was further confirmed when there was a clash between him and Mohan Singh. Following the crisis in December 1942 which developed between Mohan Singh and Rash Behari, the Japanese applied force on the German Government to send Bose of East Asia to lead the movement against the British. In October 1942, Ribbentrop arranged a forced reception in honour of Bose in the presence of Secretary of State Keppler, and other German officials including Dr. Trott. Ribbentrop had arranged for Bose to fly to East Asia. However, as this confidential information had leaked out the flight was cancelled. Bose blamed the Italians for lack of secrecy. In early November 1942 Bose again went to Rome along with Werth and Yamamoto for arranging another flight, but all the flights had been delayed due to Italian-Japanese disagreement over certain technicalities and Russian objection to overflight. Finally, the idea of travelling by air was abandoned and Bose returned to Berlin, where arrangements were made for him to travel by submarine. The details of Bose's departure were finalised only in January 1943, and Japan agreed to supply a submarine on 2 February, 1943 to receive Bose. Bose could leave by a German submarine with one companion Abid Hassan on 8 February, 1943. Bose reached Sebang safely on 6 May and left for Tokyo on 16 May. He assumed the leadership of the movement in the first week of July 1943.

Submarine Voyage of Netaji

The understanding between Germany and Japan was that the German submarine carrying Netaji would cover the longer distance between the coast of Northern Germany and the Cape of Good Hope at the Southern tip of Africa, and from there a Japanese submarine would take Netaji across the Indian Ocean to the vicinity of Malaya and Singapore. Netaji would leave the German vessel and embark on the Japanese submarine at a point off the African coast near Madagascar.

Netaji's enthusiasm seemed a little out of character, considering that he was a hard-headed realist who should have considered India's victory certain in February 1943, when the war situation showed that both Germany and Japan had begun losing at all vital points.

The details of Bose's departure were finalised only in January 1943 and Japan agreed to supply a submarine on 2 February, 1943 to receive Bose. Bose could leave by a German submarine with one companion on 8 February, 1943.

The submarine was due to leave the port of Kiel early in the morning of 8 February, 1943. Netaji was to be accompanied on the trip by a young man called Abid Hassan Safrani who was then taking military training in the Indian Legion. The understanding between Germany and Japan was that the German submarine carrying Netaji would cover the longer distance between the coast of Northern Germany and the Cape of Good Hope at the Southern tip of Africa, and from there a Japanese submarine would take Netaji across the Indian Ocean near Malaya and Singapore. Netaji would leave the German vessel and get onto the Japanese submarine somewhere near Madagascar.

For reasons of security, the Germans as well as Netaji were tight-lipped about the trip and no one except A.C.N. knew about it. Nambiar who would remain in-charge of the Free India Centre in Netaji's absence. Hassan was not told why he had been summoned. Netaji asked him whether he would be prepared to go on a mission which involved serious risk to his life. Hassan said he was prepared to go, believing that he would have to go alone for the Haj. The truth was revealed to him only after he had got into the submarine. As ordered, he had brought with him only the barest necessities, including one civilian suit of clothes and a typewriter. Netaji had ended his sojourn in Germany by doing his own packing and burning his papers. In a poignant parting, Bose bade farewell to his wife Emilie at seven o'clock in the morning at the door of the house as though he was going on a trip for two or three weeks. Netaji left for Kiel and his wife with their newly-born daughter, Anita, stayed behind.

On 26 January, 1943, Bose had addressed an Indian Independence Day meeting at the Centre which was attended by 600 people. Two days later he had delivered his last speech to the Indian Legion. At Kiel, the Commander of the U-Boat, Werner Musenberg, welcomed Netaji aboard the vessel. It was a small type-IX submarine with a speed of 18 knots on the surface and 7.5 knots under water. The submarine was on the surface of the water and the cork of the hold was being opened in order to let the two passengers and their baggage in.

This was to be Netaji's abode for the next 93 days. From Kiel, some seven or eight submarines emerged in a row and entered the waters of Denmark. The convoy had to pass between the island on which Copenhagen was situated and the Swedish coast. The submarines sailed on the surface because in the area there was complete supremacy of the German Navy and Air Force. The passengers stood on the bridge but at the place where the vessels were easily visible from the coast of neutral Sweden, measures were taken to avoid detection of the passengers by people standing on Swedish coast.

The submarines travelled northward along the Norwegian coast which was then under German occupation, and then entered the North Sea. There, the vessels dispersed and passed through the open space between Northern Scotland and Iceland. Till then the submarines had been escorted by a minesweeper sailing ahead of them to clear the way. This was the most crucial spot and British guarded this passage against enemy submarines by intermittent bombing of the waters with depth charges. The submarines managed to elude these attacks but the distant anti-submarine explosions could be heard. This long detour around the British Isles was prompted by the need to avoid the hazards of passing through the English Channel.

The submarines sailed on the surface but dived at high risk places. At night, the vessels usually took to the surface and used their diesel oil engines.

The air inside the submarine was thick with the smell of diesel oil which seemed to permeate everything—the beds, the blankets, the bread they had to eat. Everyone had only a bunk which was actually only a recess in the passage. There were no closed compartments. Hassan had one bunk among the non-commissioned officers. Netaji was given one bunk in the officer's quarters which again was only a recess in the passage.

There was only one small table for six people at which the officers could sit and have their meals. The rest could sit on their own bunks and eat.

They mostly ate out of tins. The first meal was nutritious and quite enough in quantity. Hassan after the first meal went around prospecting for food for other varieties. He made friends with the members of the crew (both he and Netaji spoke German fluently) and soon discovered that there was some rice and *mussur* dal, meant to be eaten by the Germans only once in a while. Abid began to cook *Khichri* from the first day.

With food taken care of Netaji asked Hassan to begin revising his book, *The Indian Struggle*. This work was taken in hand, dictated, typed and corrected with meticulous care before the submarine reached the western coast of France. After having bypassed Iceland and Northern Scotland, the vessel cruised further north to put as much distance between itself and the areas under British air surveillance, and then gradually descended towards the western coast of France, probably at Brest, where a mother-ship, again a submarine, replenished its stock of fuel and other necessities. This was Netaji's last contact with Europe and left the revised MSS of his book and some letters at the port for onward transmission to his wife and to the Azad Hind Centre in Berlin.

Netaji now devoted himself entirely to the task of planning out in detail the structure of his organisation in the East, the Provisional Government of Free India with its various departments and their functions. He also drafted his proclamations, policy statements and important speeches in circumstances foreseen in detail with surprising accuracy. These were dictated and taken down, mostly in long hand. He then corrected the typed material with parts of the copy retyped. Finally, he read the finished copies once again and tore them up completely, having memorized the contents for future reference. "That was the most heart-rending part of it," Hassan lamented later, referring to this destruction of the fruits of his labour. "He did not keep any records except *The Indian Struggle* because he did not need them."

Hassan's recounts

"Then he would also discuss things. First of all, the things we would require from Japan, the amount of help and also the terms.... The kind of demands we could put up—I do not remember them all now, but there were a hundred and one questions involved. He would sometimes play Subhas Chandra Bose himself and I was supposed to be Tojo. He said: 'Ask anything, just think of some questions'. Many questions came up that way. For instance, in our collaboration with the Japanese—their system of punishment and our system. What would happen if there was a clash? Questions like that arose, and by the time we reached Japan, I don't think there was any problem that we later came across which was new to us and which we had not gone into."

In the long course of the voyage, Netaji carefully planned out and rehearsed in his mind everything he later did at Singapore and Tokyo. He had to be on his bunk for eight hours a day but according to Hassan he slept for barely three or four hours, the remaining three or four hours devoted to thinking and planning.

S.A. Ayer, Netaji's Minister of Propaganda, has recalled that when the Proclamation on the establishment of the provisional Government of Free India was to be made, later in Singapore, Netaji drafted the text on the sheets of a writing pad and handed the loose sheets over for typing, one by one, as soon as he completed writing them and at the end not the smallest correction had to be made in the typed copies. It seemed as though he had already written out the text some time in advance and was now only reproducing his draft from memory. Almost always his successes came from long preparations in advance, aided by his uncanny power of anticipation.

The submarine was expected to go further south along the western coast of Europe and Africa. But actually, after coming out of the port of Brest it swerved further west in the Atlantic, as far as the coast of Brazil in search of the enemy cargo boats. It was an exercise in futility and the vessel then sailed towards the Cape of Good Hope, along the African coast. About midway, the U-boat spotted a cargo boat which was an oil-tanker. After following it for some distance the submarine surfaced around the evening and torpedoed it. The boat sank, spilling oil over a large area over the water, giving the two civilians their first view of the sea being on fire. They also saw how colour prejudice made the difference between life and death as they witnessed the sinking British vessel giving some coloured men in its mixed crew a kind of raft which seemed to offer little hope of survival. Then came out the real life boats which carried only white men.

Two days after this, the submarine had a narrow escape. Mistake or miscalculation made the submarine to surface quite close to the stern of a cargo boat. The Captain of the latter made the ship take an about turn and then rushed towards it at full speed in an attempt to run it down. Abid Hassan described those critical moments in the following words:

"Now in the inter-communication system I could hear the captain shouting "Dive! Dive! Dive! But having surfaced by mistake, it was not so easy to dive immediately. Normally, it took hardly a minute for the submarine to dive when everything was in order. But having surfaced by mistake, it took quite some time before the steering master could go down. I could hear the roar of the cargo boat coming towards us, and my heart sank.... This was happening in a matter of seconds when all of a sudden I heard: 'Hassan, I have dictated the matter to you twice and you have not taken it down.'

" I got the shock of my life. Then I steadied myself and began to take down the dictation from him, and Netaji continued dictating in the same tone as before. All the time, I could see the pale frightened faces of the German crew, at least those who were near us, and I could hear the Captain shouting.

"The end was a happy one, otherwise I would not have been here to relate the story. But the cargo boat did touch a side of our bridge and we swerved over by 45 degrees. But we steadied again, and after the danger was past, the Captain gave a lecture over the inter-communication system and said, "We have passed through a really dangerous time, whatever the reason may be, but although we are supposed to be of the German nation, a fighting people, I have seen with my own eyes how some of you have reacted, and I wish you had seen as an example of how one should behave in danger from the Indian leader we have on board, Mr. Bose and from his secretary.'

Finally, the submarine reached the Cape of Good Hope and sailed around it to enter the Indian Ocean. It soon arrived at the south-west of Madagascar, the spot where it was due to meet the Japanese submarine.

On arrival, the German U-boat spotted the Japanese submarine, which was a much bigger vessel, on 26 April. According to Japanese historians, the Japanese submarine of the I-29 type had left Penang on the Malayan coast on 20 April, and arrived at the appointed spot ten hours in advance. The two vessels recognised each other on the isolated ocean surface by the evening of 26 April. The sea was choppy, rendering it impossible for the two submarines to come close to each other for fear of a collision. Exchange of messages by radio was out because it might immediately attract enemy planes to the spot. The two boats remained on the surface for many hours for fear of losing sight of each other and continued to sail together in a north-easterly direction when the commander of the German U-boat decided to end the indefinite wait for the sea to calm down, because further delay might cause difficulty for the smaller vessel due to shortage of fuel. Towards the evening of 27 April, two of its bravest men, one an officer and an other a signal man, jumped into the sea and swam across to the Japanese submarine to tell the Japanese Commanding Officer Captain Teraoka of its predicament. The Japanese submarine then lowered on the water a rubber raft on which the two men sailed back to the German submarine dragging with them one end of a strong rope which was then tied to the German submarine. Netaji and Abid Hassan then descended onto the raft vacated by the two Germans, and holding on for dear life on to the rope, inched towards the Japanese submarine, in spite of the waves tossing the raft violently in all directions. After hours of perilous joint operations, in the midst of the danger of the two civilians being lost in the shark-infested sea near Madagascar, Bose and Hassan were transferred onto the Japanese submarine. It was, the first ever transhipment of men from one submarine to another in mid-sea during a war.

Aboard the submarine were a group of Japanese naval officers, including commander Juichi Izu, who greeted Netaji warmly. The submarine sailed straight for Sabang without returning to Penang where rumours were rife about Bose's arrival.

On arrival at Sabang, on 6 May Netaji was greeted by his old friend Col. Satoshi Yamamoto who was the Military Attache at the Japanese Embassy in Berlin. He had arrived in Asia by a direct flight over Russian air space. He informed Netaji that the Iwakuro Kikan which had been responsible for embroiling Japan's relation with the INA men had been superseded by a new organization named Hikari Kikan of which he had been designated the head.

It took him full ten days to reach Tokyo from Sabang. He was kept waiting there for five days on the grounds that he must be very tired. Netaji protested saying that he was not tired at all and was ready to leave any moment. Five days more were spent on transporting him to Tokyo in six stages and at each of the stops he had to stay overnight. The reason given was that no plane was available for the long-range flight to Tokyo. Therefore, a small short-range military plane did the job in six short hops, stopping on the way at Penang, Saigon, Manila, Taipei and Hemamatsu. For security reasons, Netaji's identity was kept secret during the journey, and he travelled under the assumed Japanese name of Matsuda. On 16th May, he reached Tokyo and proceeded directly to the Imperial Hotel.

Netaji wrote his thanks on the photograph he had taken together with the crew members when he disembarked from the Japanese submarine. "It was a great pleasure to sail aboard this submarine. I am deeply grateful to the Japanese Imperial Government for having made it possible. The Captain has always treated me and my aid-de-camp so nicely that we felt quite at home during the voyage. I hereby express my sincere thanks for the kindness shown us by all the crew members from Captain downwards. The voyage I had aboard this ship will evoke pleasant memories for the rest of my life. I believe that this will mark a milestone in our fight for victory and peace."

Signed: Subhas Chandra Bose

10

Not a Puppet of the Japanese

The final act of Netaji in the drama of freedom struggle comprised of his role in South-East Asia as the Head of the Indian Independence League (I.I.L.) and as the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian National Army (I.N.A.). He drove himself and his men, mobilised material and other resources to fight the British to free his motherland from the shackles of slavery. He issued new slogans to his followers like *Chalo Delhi* (Onward to Delhi), *Tum Mujhe Khoon Do Mei Tumhe Azadi Doonga* (Give me blood, I will give you freedom), etc.

The I.I.L. under revolutionaries like Rash Behari Bose, Pritam Singh, Col. Mohan Singh, specially invited Subhas Bose to South-East Asia to take charge of it. Subhas accepted the invitation and left Germany for South-East Asia by a submarine.

From Berlin to Tokyo

When Netaji reached Japan, the situation in South-East Asia then (1943-45) was volcanic. Tension was simmering. Japan, the key power of the area, was involved in the Second World War as an Axis power pitched against the Allied powers. The whole South-East Asia from Burma to Japan, was under the command of Japan. The Indian revolutionaries, aided by Japan, planned to attack British authority in India and liberate her. They were only waiting for a resourceful General to lead them to Delhi. He arrived in the form of Netaji.

Bose arrived in Saban, an isolated offshore islet, north of Sumatra, instead of Penang (Malaya), where the secrecy of Bose's arrival was revealed by the Japanese submarine, I-29, on 6 May, 1943. Bose was received as a Japanese VIP with the assumed name Matsuda by Col. Yamamoto, former Japanese military attache to the Japanese Embassy in Berlin, and the then Director of the Hikari Kikan, a Japanese ('F') organ of psychological warfare and intelligence officers and also an advisory group to I.N.A.

After five days Bose flew from Saban by a short-range combat plane, with an overnight stop each at Penang, Saigon, Manila, Taipei and Hamamatsu and reached Tokyo on 16 May, 1943. This was his first visit to Tokyo, the headquarters of the third and the last phase of his freedom struggle. He stayed in the Imperial Hotel, very near the Imperial Palace and the Prime Minister's office.

Adventure had always been the hallmark of Bose's life. His travel from Berlin to Tokyo was not without its fair share of pitfalls. "Through the entire annals of World War II, this was the only known submarine-to-submarine transfer of passengers in an area dominated by enemy air and naval strength." Navy experts of many nations have termed their success as a near miracle." For Netaji the tremendously perilous voyage from Germany to Japan took more than ninety days. Adam Von Trott retorted to a cable message from the German Ambassador in Tokyo that the Japanese Naval Command objected to a civilian travelling on a ship in a war time: "Subhas Chandra Bose is by no means a private person but Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Liberation Army." His presence in Tokyo could not be announced and the INA men at Singapore also knew nothing about it.

In his characteristic brisk style, Bose wasted no time in starting his work. From the very next day of his arrival in Tokyo, on 17 May, Bose started his political mission. He met the Japanese Army and Navy Chiefs of Staff, Navy Minister and Foreign Minister. He had to wait for about twenty-five days, until 10 June, 1943, to see the Prime Minister of Japan, who was also the War Minister, the German-educated General Tojo.

Six months earlier, the tide had turned against the Axis

Powers as they fell when Germany withdrew from Stalingrad, and the German and Italian forces collapsed on the African front. Japan had entered World War II, a year and half earlier, on 8 December, 1941.

Subhas and Rash Behari: Meeting of the two Boses

In June 1943, Rash Behari Bose, President of the I.I.L. met Bose in the Imperial Hotel and briefed him about the situation and requested him to take up leadership of the Indian Independence movement in the Far East.

Rash Behari had escaped to Japan under the name Tagore after he had thrown a bomb at Lord Hardinge, the then Viceroy and Governor-General of India, in 1912, and since then had been staying in Japan, as its citizen, marrying a Japanese woman. Earlier, for several years he was protected by Prof. Toyama, of the Black Dragon Society of Japan.

The day after Japan entered World War II, the I.I.L. was officially inaugurated at Bangkok in December 1941, under the leadership of BabaAmar Singh, assisted by Giani Pritam Singh, two young Indian revolutionaries who had escaped in December 1940 from the Hong kong prison, where they were imprisoned for their anti-British movement and sought asylum under the Japanese Government.

Rash Behari Bose was the keyfigure behind laying the groundwork for the I.I.L. over the years. He played a remarkable role in the Indian revolutionary movement thirty years ago, but having spent so many years of his life in Japan, his name was not well known to young people in India. The Japanese military leaders had come to believe that Subhas, would make a much more efficient leader of the independence movement and they sent for Rash Behari Bose so that he could meet Subhas to discuss the future course of their movement. On learning of the decision, Col. Iwakuro was in a dilemma. He doubted if Rash Behari Bose would agree to turn the leadership over to Subhas after having devoted so many years of his life to the spadework in organizing the Indian independence movement. When he talked to Rash Behari Bose about the matter, the latter readily concurred, saying, "That is a good idea. He is a born leader. I will be glad to turn the leadership over to Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose. Our ultimate goal is to win our independence. Since I have done my bit, I would like Mr Chandra Bose to take over. He is young and bouncy."

Finally, in the second week of June, the two Boses met for the first time. They had been fighting for the same cause, although distance separated them. They shook hands in the dramatic meeting and vowed to fight harder for the independence of India. Bin Yamamoto gives his account of the first meeting between the two Boses: "They met each other for the first time on 12 or 13 June at the Imperial Hotel, Tokyo. I was charged with the task of introducing them. When I ushered Mr. Behari Bose into the room of Mr. Chandra Bose, they, both of whom had dedicated themselves to the independence of their fatherland since their younger days, shook hands and embraced each other. The dramatic meeting apparently made their hearts rise up in their throats. They were so deeply moved that they could not talk. After a while, they began to talk like old friends in their own language. And I left them alone. Their meeting lasted for about an hour. After the meeting Mr. Behari Bose said to me, "I feel quite relieved. I am leaving him for the present. Please let him stay in Tokyo as long as he likes." With that, he left. I had never seen him so happy."

As a result of this meeting, Rash Behari Bose named Subhas Chandra Bose as the President of the I.I.L. at the meeting held in Singapore. The latter, in turn, named the former the Supreme Consultant to the League.

A rally of 25000 Indians in Singapore on 12 August, 1942 and another in Rangoon on 10 April, 1943 impressed and even alarmed the Japanese government, of the spirit and strength of the Indian Independence Movement in East Asia. By August, 1942, 40,000 Indians signed to serve in the I.N.A. A division of 16,000 was ready by September 1942. Gen. Mohan Singh's target was 2,50,000 which alarmed Col. Iwakuro.

Meanwhile, differences were escalating between Rash Behari Bose, President of the I.I.L., who had been charged as a "Japanese puppet" and Gen. Mohan Singh, G.O.C. of the I.N.A.

Netaji and Premier Tojo

Subhas arrived in Tokyo on 16 May, 1943, after twenty-five days later, i.e., 10 June, 1943 a meeting had still to materialise between Bose and Prime Minister Tojo, who kept putting it off on the pretext of work. Yamamoto took charge of the liaison and arranged for Netaji's meeting with the Army Chief of Staff, General Sugiyama, Foreign Minister, Mamoru Shigemitsu, Navy Minister, Yonai and, after that, with the Chiefs of the various sections of the Army, Navy and Foreign Ministries.

Tojo's obvious reluctance to meet Netaji was a serious roadblock in his way because without the Japanese Premier's go-ahead all his carefully laid out plans would go awry. He could only persuade Tojo to lend his assistance if he got an opportunity to talk to him. Col. Yamamoto the head of the Hikari Kikan, had found the inordinate delays so exasperating that he officially requested the Imperial General Headquarters to relieve him of the post of chief of the Kikan. Netaji had also met the once-dreaded revolutionary leader of the Black Dragon Society, Mitsuru Toyama who had rescued Rash Behari Bose in the past by his influence over the Government. Though old, Toyama still had considerable clout with the Japanese Government. Finally, due to these pressures from many quarters, Tojo ultimately agreed to see Netaji. This meeting completely altered Tojo's attitude towards him so much so that he himself asked for a second meeting four days later when he agreed to most of Netaji's requests for help.

At their second meeting, held on 14 June, Bose and Tojo exchanged their views about the idea of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. Sitting at this meeting were Foreign Minister Shigemitsu and other government leaders.

Furthermore Tojo made it clear that Japan was ready to help India attain her freedom and that the offer of help was without any strings attached.

This second meeting with Tojo had produced the most important result of enlisting the Prime Minister's wholehearted support for Netaji's programme. At the end of the meeting, Tojo is reported to have told Shigemitsu, "He is a great Indian, fully qualified to command the INA". Shigemitsu replied: "Yes Sir, I fully agree with your appraisal."

Historian Tatsou Hayashida has described Netaji as a "great personality with magnetic and almost hypnotic charm", and went on to explain how Tojo, who was basically a cynic, could have fallen under Netaji's spell: "By June 1943, Tojo was beginning to show signs of cracking under the strain. He was becoming unsure of himself and shaky at heart. That was a mentality receptive to the influence of a magnetic personality."

On 16 June Netaji was invited to attend the 82nd Extraordinary Session of the National Diet where Premier Tojo, made a historic speech spelling out his policy on the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. After outlining the implications of this policy for each country in the region, Tojo turned to Netaji and spoke in a manner which made it clear that his words were particularly addressed to the Indian leader. He said: "We are indignant about the fact that India is still under the ruthless suppression of Britain and are in full sympathy with her desperate struggle for independence. We are determined to extend every possible assistance to the cause of India's independence. It is our belief that the day is not far off when India will enjoy freedom and prosperity after winning independence." Premier Tojo had made public in January that some Indian people are fighting against Britain in co-operation with Japan." The Diet emboldened Bose to make his true identity known.

On 19 June, he appeared in his own name in Tokyo at his first Press Conference. About sixty Japanese and foreign newsmen were present including diplomatic missions. Bose began his speech with the remark: "To my regret, I can't speak Japanese and therefore let me speak in English, which is the language of our enemy." There, he highlighted Tojo's announcement assuring the Indian freedom movement "all possible assistance" as a great event. The movement, he said, would now develop into an armed struggle. He also predicted that the victory of the Axis Powers would result in India's freedom. Then on 21 and 24 June Bose made two broadcasts over Radio Tokyo to the people of India to tell them of the great importance of Tojo's assurance. He said: "General Tojo is not only taking personal interest in India but he is leaving no stone unturned in order to give all the assistance that lies within the power of the Japanese Government to help India in her struggle against British imperialism." Then he added: "I can say with utmost confidence that apart from any assistance we may receive from the Japanese Government, Prime Minister Tojo is personally anxious to see India free from the British yoke at an early date."

Netaji was a shrewd orator and he tried to make this promise a matter of personal honour for Tojo, in addition to the promise of his Government. Bose fully supported adopting violent methods, said as much: "Since the enemy fights with his sword we too should fight with the sword... I have full faith in the total victory of the three powers... and in the liberation of the forty crores of the Indian people."

The press all over the world commented on the statement issued by Bose at the press conference on 19 June, 1943.

Bose appealed to Indians over Radio Tokyo at 10 p.m. on 21 June and at 6.15 p.m. on 22 June, 1943, to the Germans and at 6.40 p.m. on the same day to the Italians for the cause of Indian independence.

***The Times* of London wrote:**

"All the newspapers in the countries under Axis Powers expect a great deal from his forthcoming activities and claim that the plea he made over the radio from Tokyo was far more effective than any broadcasts he made from Berlin. His movement to Tokyo means...the centre of the Indian independence movement has moved from Berlin to Tokyo. Germany and Italy failed to do much to help the Indian independence movement..."

Netaji wanted that there should be an armed attack on the British forces occupying India and that the men of the Azad Hind Fauj should play a heroic role before the eyes of their own countrymen, or before the Indian soldiers employed by the Foreign power. He kept repeating at every opportunity his whole-hearted faith that Japan's victory in the war was certain. This created, in a subtle manner, a belief among the Japanese that it would be unbecoming of them to express or to harbour in their minds a feeling of diffidence when a foreign ally was full of courage and determination, and was prepared to stake his life for it.

Netaji's main field of work for preparation of the attack on British India was in Singapore, Malaya and other South-East Asian countries. Before leaving Tokyo he broadcast two speeches for the German and Italian people in the German and Italian languages.

On 23 June, he visited the headquarters of the important political party Yokusan Seijikai. The same day, he received a message of goodwill, with assurance of all help from the Prime Minister of Burma, Dr. Ba Maw. Netaji's last act before he left Tokyo was to put in a written request to the Government of Japan that he be allowed to establish a Provisional Government of Free India with headquarters for the time being at Singapore. Since this was a matter of great importance, the Government also informed him with due ceremony that there was no objection to it in principle, but a formal reply would be given in due course. Netaji did not seem to have any doubts about the final decision because on arrival in Singapore he began to say at public meetings that he had a plan to form a Provisional Government of Free India. Before ending his forty days' stay in Tokyo Netaji gave a broadcast addressed to the people of Japan. It was recorded on 27 June and broadcast on 28 June, one day after he left.

Heart-Stirring Speech

"About forty years ago, when I had just enrolled in an elementary school, Japan, a small Asiatic country, went to war with the most powerful country of Russia and defeated it. The news of the Japanese victory spread throughout India and the Indian people went wild with excitement. People talked about the battles in Mukden and Port Arthur as well as the battle in the Sea of Japan. Since then, such Japanese heroes as Admiral Togo and General Nogi captured the imagination of Indian children. In the meantime, Tenshin Okakura visited India and expounded the philosophy of saving the whole of Asia including Japan. He was a great pioneer who advocated the theory of 'Asia is one and the same'.

"I was very warmly received wherever I went since I came to Japan. I take your warm reception as a sign of the sympathy the Japanese people have for the 400-million people of India who are groaning under British oppression and fighting for freedom. I would like to take this occasion to thank you all for the sympathy you are showing towards us. On behalf of the Indian people, I promise not to forget the sympathy the Japanese people showed to our independence movement. Japan defeated our common enemy and thus provided us Indians with a golden opportunity to move ahead with our independence movement. The Indian people are fully aware and deeply appreciative of it. Should we miss this chance, another chance will not come for a hundred years. We should never fail to take advantage of this moment. We will win a victory and freedom for India. I must tell you that the Indian people are not only groaning under the British rule but are also misled by their cunning propaganda. I want you to keep a close watch on their propaganda. There is no discrimination because of religion and caste in India today. New India wants freedom for its entire people. This new India is co-operating with Japan in fighting the common enemy."

Just before Bose's departure from Tokyo, he received a telegram from Dr. Ba Maw the Prime Minister of Burma on 23 June. It read, "I sincerely congratulate you on your return to the East. Your first statement issued in Tokyo deeply impressed the Indian people here and gave them courage and hope. Both Indian and Burmese peoples have long awaited this opportunity. The time has come for us to rise. Burma hereby pledges herself to fight on your side in the event of your fight for the national honour and independence."

Netaji Appears in Singapore

(a) *Nominated as President of the I.I.L.*

On 27 June, Subhas Chandra Bose, and Rash Behari Bose, arrived in Singapore, which used to be the British stronghold, and were enthusiastically welcomed by the leaders of the I.I.L., the I.N.A. as well as a large number of Indian nationals residing in the city. Among those present were also representatives of the Japanese Army Command and the Hikari Kikan.

On the occasion, Rash Behari Bose announced his resignation as President of the I.I.L. and proposed Subhas Chandra Bose as its new leader. The audience response was applause and hearty cheers. Bose went on the platform to address the audience as their new leader. He said, "Mr. Rash Behari Bose, the leader of the Indian Independence movement in East Asia! Let me thank you from the bottom of my heart for having named me as the new leader of the Indian independence movement in East Asia. I have accepted that responsibility. The time has come for freedom-loving Indians to rise and act. I should like to call on all our fellow countrymen in East Asia to close the ranks under unified leadership and prepare fully for the hard fight that we will face before long. There is no doubt that the British Government will tighten its noose of exploitation around the Indian people during and after the war. This is well indicated by the fact that Wavell is going to be appointed as Governor-General. While imposing military, dictatorial government on the Indian people under the new Governor-General, the British Government will attempt to get India to compromise with Britain. This once happened in April 1942, when the special envoy Cripps came up with a proposal suggesting something along those lines. It has been eighty-five years since the outbreak of the first Indian Independence War. Gandhiji was put under arrest. August of 1942 must be long remembered as a milestone in the history of the Indian independence movement. However, the independence movement based upon the principle of non-violence and civil disobedience has moved into the next phase. It is the goal and objective of our new organization to rise in arms against British Imperialism. To make it possible to mobilize all our energies and strength, I am planning to form a Provisional Government of Free India. If and when we succeed in our revolution and in driving the American and British Imperialism out of India, the mission of our provisional government will be over. And then, a permanent government will be established in India according to the will of the Indian people. It is then and there that this provisional government will hand over its authority to the new government."

Referring to the cooperation among Japan, Germany and Italy, he said, "When preparations for the final stage of our struggle are completed, we can integrate our independence movement into the Japanese-German-Italian united front against the common enemy. We can qualify for freedom and independence by taking part in the joint struggle. Only by winning freedom through our own efforts and by our own sacrifice can we develop our strength to preserve the freedom thus won."

To remove any sort of ambiguity, Netaji left no one in any doubt that the Indian independence movement had evolved of its own free will, that they were only collaborating on their own initiative with the Axis Powers to fight the common enemy and that they were by no means "a puppet of any third country." He concluded by stating: "In view of the fact that our enemy is powerful, relentless and stops at nothing, we have to prepare ourselves for the hard fight that lies before us. You may face hunger and hardship in our final fight for freedom. I am sure that you will stand the test and bring freedom and prosperity to our poverty-ridden fatherland."

His eloquence, and sincerity speech enthralled the entire audience.

While in Singapore, Netaji accompanied by Mr. Rash Behari Bose, also called on Gen. Terauchi, Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Southern Army Command, at his official residence. In a moving encounter, Gen. Terauchi welcomed Netaji with open arms. He also patted Mr. Rash Behari Bose on the back for the success he had made of his former office.

Taking over the helm of the Indian independence movement, Netaji inspected the I.N.A. on 5 July. For the first time he donned the khaki uniform of the Supreme Commander of the I.N.A. For the first time, he gave this army of liberation, the war-cry of 'Chalo Delhi' (Onward to Delhi) and he gave the assembled civilians the slogan of 'Total Mobilisation'. Tens of thousands of Indian troops, led by Commander Bhonsle, marched past and pledged their allegiance to their new leader. Netaji addressed the soldiers and officers of the I.N.A., standing at attention under the scorching sun.

"Soldiers of India's Army of Liberation: Today is the proudest day of my life. Today it has pleased Providence to give me the unique privilege and honour of announcing to the whole world that India's Army of Liberation has come into being. This army has now been drawn up in military formation on the battlefield of Singapore, which was once the bulwark of the British Empire. This is not only the Army that will emancipate India from the British yoke, it is also the Army that will hereafter create the future national army of Free India. Every Indian must feel proud that this Army—his own Army—has been organized entirely under Indian leadership and that, when the historic moment arrives, under Indian leadership it will go to battle.

"There are people who thought at one time that the Empire on which the sun did not set was everlasting. No such thought ever troubled me. History had taught me that every empire has its inevitable decline and collapse. Moreover I had seen, with my own eyes, cities and fortresses that were once the bulwarks become the graveyards of by-gone empires. Standing today on the graveyard of the British empire, even a child is convinced that the almighty British empire is already a thing of the past.

"When France declared war on Germany in 1939 and the campaign began, there was but one cry which rose from the lips of German soldiers—'To Paris, To Paris'. When the brave soldiers of Nippon set out on their march in December 1941 there was but one cry which rose from their lips—'To Singapore, to Singapore. Comrades, Soldiers! Let your battle cry be 'To Delhi, To Delhi'. How many of us will individually survive this war of freedom, I don't know. But I do know this that we shall ultimately win and our task will not end until our surviving heroes hold the victory parade on another graveyard of the British empire—the Lal Killa or Red Fort of ancient Delhi.

"Throughout my public career, I have always felt that though India is otherwise ripe for independence in every way, she has lacked one thing, namely an army of liberation. George Washington of America could fight and win freedom because he had his army, Garibaldi could liberate Italy because he had his armed volunteers behind him. It is your privilege and honour to be the first to come forward and organize India's national army. By doing so, you have removed the last obstacle in your path to freedom. Be happy and proud that you are the pioneers, the vanguard, in such a noble cause.

"Let me remind you that you have a two-fold task to perform. With the force of arms and at the cost of your blood you will have to win liberty. Then, when India is free, you will have to organize the permanent army of Free India, whose task it will be to preserve our liberty for all time. We must build up our national defence on such an unshakable foundation that never again in our history shall we lose our freedom. As soldiers, you will always have to cherish and live up to the three ideals of faithfulness, duty and sacrifice. Soldiers who always remain faithful to their nation, who are always prepared to sacrifice their lives, are invincible. If you, too, want to be invincible, engrave these three ideals in the innermost core of your hearts.

"A true soldier needs both military and spiritual training. You must, all of you, so train yourselves and your comrades that every soldier will have unbounded confidence in himself, will be conscious of being immensely superior to the enemy, will be fearless of death, and will have sufficient initiative to act on his own in any critical situation, should the need arise. During the course of the present war, you have seen with your own eyes what wonders scientific training, coupled with courage, fearlessness and dynamism can achieve. Learn all that you can from this example, and build up for Mother India an absolutely first-class modern army.

"To those of you who are officers, I should like to say that your responsibility is a heavy one. Though the responsibility of an officer in every army in this world is indeed great, it is far greater in your case. Because of our political enslavement, we have no tradition like that of Mukden, Port Arthur or Sedan to inspire us. We have to unlearn some of the things that the British taught us and we have to learn much that they did not teach. Nevertheless, I am confident that you will rise to the occasion and fulfil the task that your countrymen have thrown on your brave shoulders. Remember always that an officer can make or unmake an army. Remember, too, that the British have suffered defeats on so many fronts largely because of worthless officers. And remember also that out of your ranks will be born the future General Staff of the Army of Free India.

"To all of you I should like to say that in the course of this war you will have to acquire the experience and achieve the success which alone can build up a national tradition for our Army. An army that has no tradition of courage, fearlessness and invincibility cannot hold its own in a struggle with a powerful enemy.

"Comrades: You have voluntarily accepted a mission that is the noblest that the human mind can conceive of. For the fulfilment of such a mission no sacrifice is too great, not even the sacrifice of one's life. You are today the custodians of India's national honour and embodiment of India's hopes and aspirations. So conduct yourself that your countrymen may bless you and posterity may be proud of you.

"I have said that today is the proudest day of my life. For an enslaved people, there can be no greater pride, no higher honour than to be the first soldier in the army of liberation. But this honour carries with it a corresponding responsibility and I am deeply conscious of it. I assure you that I shall be with you in darkness and in sunshine, in sorrow and in joy, in suffering and in victory. For the present, I can offer you nothing except hunger, thirst, privation, forced marches and death. But if you follow me in life and in death, as I am confident you will, I shall lead you to victory and freedom. It does not matter who among us will live to see India free. It is enough that India shall be free and that we shall give our all to make her free. May God bless our Army and grant us victory in the coming fight.

Inquilab Zindabad, Azad Hind Zindabad."

The next day, on 6 July, Premier Tojo arrived in Singapore on his way to Thailand and Malaya.

Netaji invited the Japanese Premier to review the I.N.A. that he had just taken over, and at the same time requested further cooperation in sprucing up the I.N.A.

(b) *Netaji's activities in East Asia*

On return to East Asia the first and foremost priority of Subhas Bose was to establish a provisional government and to breathe new life into the I.N.A. This was what he had been dreaming about ever since his Berlin days. Netaji was convinced that the I.I.L. alone was not enough to unite the Indians in and out of India. To buttress its commendable efforts, the establishing of a provincial government was needed. In reality, the idea had more success than he expected. His announcement created quite a stir in India. It also resulted in inspiring great interest in the independence movement among the Indians residing in East Asia.

After publicly declaring his mission, he was left facing two problems. One was the composition of the provisional government and the other getting it officially recognised by the Japanese Government. Regarding the first, the organization had many hurdles thus putting Netaji in a difficult position and also injuring the cause of the Provisional Government and the Hikari Kikan as well. One major problem which Netaji encountered was that as the Provisional Government had to solicit donations from the Indians, some turned hostile towards the Government and some merchants duped people of their money under the guise of collecting donations.

To combat this difficulty, Netaji wanted to be near to the Indian border. Further, he originally wanted to establish the Provisional Government in Burma to make it easier for him to move into India directly. Since the Burmese Government was not in favour of such a move, Netaji had to choose Singapore as the seat of his Provisional Government. Singapore, had the advantages which suited Bose for propaganda purposes, transportation and communications facilities, as well as the fact that it was strategically located to maintain liaison with the Japanese Army Headquarters. When the Japanese Army announced its intention to advance to Imphal, Netaji immediately ventured to participate in the military operations. He moved his Provisional Government to Rangoon after obtaining the consent of the Burmese Government on the condition that he would refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of Burma. His entry into Burma had as its purpose the psychological effect it would have on the Indian public as well as the boosting of the morale of the Indian National Army.

As regards the Japanese recognition of the Provisional Government of Free India, Japan honoured its commitment by answering in the affirmative through Premier Tojo when he visited Singapore, and followed it up with an official recognition in the latter part of October. Netaji then concentrated on the reorganization of Indian National Army. The Indian National Army had been raised before Netaji was installed as President, and the quality of the officers, particularly the majors and the colonels, was inferior because recruitment had been indiscriminate and hasty to organize the army. Though, there were some efficient high-ranking officers and equally competent men, but many officers were unprincipled and opportunistic. Lamentably many of the high-ranking officers above the rank of major lacked military capability. The Indian National Army was 13,000-strong when

Netaji took over command.

Netaji then went on a whirlwind tour of Malaya, Thailand, Burma and French Indo-China to rouse Indians there to come forward and sacrifice their all, including their lives, in the final battle for India's freedom. The response was overwhelming wherever he went.

Netaji also reorganized the I.I.L. headquarters and expanded its activities. The departments already functioning at the League headquarters were: General Finance, Publicity, Intelligence, and Recruitment and Training. Netaji strengthened these departments and added the following: (1) Social Welfare; (2) Women's Affairs; (3) National Education and Culture; (4) Reconstruction; (5) Supply; (6) Overseas; and (7) Housing and Transport. Dr Lakshmi Swaminathan, who later became Commandant of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment and a Colonel of the I.N.A., was placed in charge of the Women's Department. Instructions were issued to strengthen the League branches throughout East Asia on the above guidelines.

Netaji divided his time between the League headquarters and the headquarters of the Supreme Command of the I.N.A.

When he was satisfied that the I.N.A. had been thoroughly organized, he took the next step of establishing the Provisional Government of Free India outside India, in Singapore, on the historic day of October 21, 1943, that is, less than four months after he took over the leadership of the movement in East Asia. Things had picked up the much-needed pace.

The next day, he opened the Rani of Jhansi Regiment Camp in Singapore, which was immediately flooded with hundreds of exuberant Indian women and girls who left their sheltered existence to join the ranks of freedom fighters. They were given the most intensive military training, including rifle and bayonet-charge practice.

The following night the Provisional Government of Azad Hind declared war on Britain and America. A few hours later, Netaji addressed a mammoth rally of Indians, civilians and soldiers, and took a solemn pledge from them that they would sacrifice their all in waging the war for the liberation of India.

A few days later nine countries—Japan, Germany, Italy, Croatia, Burma, Thailand, National China, the Philippines and

Manchuria—accorded their formal recognition to the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. A week after forming the Provisional Government, Netaji flew to Tokyo where he attended the Greater East Asia Conference in the first week of November. He was received by the Emperor of Japan with all the honours due to the Head of the State of the Provisional Government of Free India.

At the Greater East Asia Conference, Premier Tojo of Japan announced on 6 November that Japan had decided to hand over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the Provisional Government, which thus acquired its first stretch of territory of Free India. It was a victory.

Returning to Singapore towards the end of December, Netaji left for the Andamans where he stepped on Free India territory on 31 December, 1943. The Provisional Government renamed the Andaman and Nicobar Islands as the Shaheed (Martyrs) and Swaraj (Independence) Islands. He also planned the three-colour flag symbolising freedom for both these islands.

Before leaving for the Andamans, Netaji appointed a committee to make recommendations for the national unification of Indians in East Asia regarding language, dress, food, greeting, emblem and ceremonies. Netaji gave the greatest importance to this aspect of constructive work as an abiding unifying factor in the Indian nation.

From the Andamans, Netaji flew to Burma via Bangkok and established the headquarters of the Provisional Government, the I.I.L. and the I.N.A. Supreme Command in Rangoon. There were now two headquarters, the one in Rangoon, and the rear headquarters in Singapore.

The Provisional Government of Free India enters Burma

It was on 7 January, 1944 that the Provisional Government of Free India moved to Rangoon. Netaji had always planned to use Burma as a springboard to jump at the enemy in India. Now, with this move he made a step forward towards India.

After moving into Burma, Netaji declared independence in August.

However, the 15th Army, commanded by Lt.-Gen Mutaguchi, which was in charge of the defence of Burma, found it a difficult task to build a defence line strong enough to hold against the enemy because of the paucity of manpower, numerical inferiority in air power and inadequate logistical support from the rear.

Meanwhile, indications of the enemy's counter-attack were increasing by the day. It was early in January 1944 that final orders were issued for the Regional Army Command in Burma to attack Imphal on 10 March. Since the operations were delayed by two months in this rain-afflicted area, it adversely affected the subsequent development of the whole operation in this area. Secondly, since the operations were jointly of the I.N.A. and the Japanese Army utmost care and prudence was called for.

The Japanese Regional Army Command in Burma and the Provisional Government of Free India and the I.N.A. were in close contact all along. The Regional Army Command was first formed in March 1943 and Gen. Kawabe was named its Commander. Before his departure from Tokyo for Burma to assume the command, Gen. Kawabe was summoned by Premier Tojo and told that "the real purpose of the military operations in Burma is to pave the way for Indian independence movement". Aware of the significance of his mission, Gen. Kawabe left for Burma.

In Rangoon, in May, the representatives of the I.N.A., visited him. Since it became certain that Netaji would move to the front, the Army Command set about making preparations to join forces with the I.N.A. from both political and strategical considerations. The Japanese side had to make arrangements for the Provisional Government of Free India and the I.N.A. to move into Burma. As the strategical plans of the Japanese Army to launch the operations progressed, it became imperative to work out plans for Indo-Japanese collaboration. The Japanese made it a principle to stick to their basic policy of helping India achieve her independence.

Hence, they decided to put the entire Indian territory occupied by them under Indian control. They also made it a point to let Netaji have an access to every Anglo-Japanese matter, political or strategical.

Gen. Kawabe was highly impressed by Netaji's imposing personality, broad vision and passion for independence, and promised to extend every possible cooperation and assistance to make Indian independence a reality.

Netaji told the Japanese General:

(a) The Indian National Army should be the spearhead of the whole advance into India. The first drop of blood to be shed on Indian soil should be that of a member of the I.N.A.

(b) In view of the fact that the present war will be prolonged, I want to improve the quality and quantity of the I.N.A.

(c) Since the existing situation is working to the disadvantage of the Axis Powers, the Indian public are in two minds as to which side to support. They are susceptible to a compromise with the British. There is an urgent need to take a decisive action. Should this action be delayed, the Indian public might be won over to the enemy side.

(d) One way to prevent this from happening is to set up the Provisional Government inside India as soon as the I.N.A. moves into India, then the evidence of our political capability will win radical elements over to our side. Then support will increase at a snow-balling pace if they learn that we have Japan behind us.

At one time the Japanese suggested to Netaji that since the Japanese Army was senior army, when I.N.A. and Japanese officers of equal rank meet Indian officers should salute first. Netaji was furious at this. He said that would mean that the I.N.A. had accepted an inferior status, which he was not prepared to do. He said they both should salute at the same time. This was accepted by the Japanese.

In addition to this the I.N.A. was the only army in East Asia which was not under the Military Law of the Japanese. Several times the Japanese approached Netaji and told him that the I.N.A. should also be subject to the Japanese Military Law. Netaji refused staunchly. He told them that the I.N.A. was an independent army. This matter had ultimately to go to Tokyo, where Netaji had his way. Whenever the occasion arose Netaji made it absolutely clear that he would fight only for the independence of India and would never allow itself to be exploited by the Japanese. There were two occasions, when the Japanese approached the I.N.A. to fight for them, once in August 1944, against the Siamese in the area of Chumpong where a small Japanese force was beseiged by the Thais, (Siamese), and a second time against the Burmese army in March 1945, after the Burmese National Army had rebelled against the Japanese. On both these occasions, with the approval of Netaji, the I.N.A. refused to take any action against them.

Netaji never asked for any facility from Japan which could be provided by the Indians in the Far East. He was approached on this point but he refused to accept any assistance other than the supply of war material. He told the Indian people that he did not want to approach any one as long as they could help themselves. It was for this sincerity that the Indian people showered everything upon him—manpower, money and material wherever he went. Several Indians in the East had brought into practice the slogan of Total Mobilization. It is seldom, if ever, that people sacrifice their all for the course of which the end is uncertain but Indians of all castes and creed threw in their lot with Netaji and were ready to give whatever was asked from them.

Netaji, by organizing Indian Independence League all over East Asia, was able to instill a spirit of patriotism in the heart of every Indian, rich and poor alike, and from whom voluntary contributions flowed in freely. A large number of Indians among whom were included members of almost every community, gave their all to the *Azad Hind Fauj* and became 'Fakirs' for the sake of their country. Whole families joined the I.N.A., father the I.N.A., mother the Rani of Jhansi Regiment.

Netaji arrived in Rangoon, on 7 January. He wrote an article entitled "March Forward", in the 17 January issue of the *Azad Hind*. He wrote, "The tenth milestone in our movement for independence is our crossing of the Indian border, our ultimate goal being to advance to Delhi. The Indian National Army will not be alone in crossing the Indo-Burma border. All the people who are helping the Indian National Army and the independence movement in every way possible will be following us. We will devote ourselves, body and soul, to the operation of crossing into India and marching on to our final goal. We may follow many different routes, but all these routes should lead to only one destination, that is Delhi, the capital city of India."

He added, "We will all act according to plan. When the time comes, we will proceed to implement our pledge with full confidence. We place full trust in our allies and are confident of our ability to win ultimate victory."

Soon after he moved into Burma, news of the death of Kasturba Gandhi reached him. He issued a statement expressing condolence on her death and also reiterating his determination to fight against the British, who were responsible for it.

The Indian National Army Crosses the Indo-Burma Border

After the Provisional Government of Free India moved into Burma the Japanese Army formed, at Netaji's suggestion, the Japanese-Indo-Burmese military liaison group for facilitating the joint operations of the Indian National Army and the Japanese Army. Preparations for invading India progressed at a rapid pace despite many hurdles. By early March, three divisions under the Japanese 15th Army Command had been deployed on the left bank of the Chindoween river. Of these, the 31st Division was deployed so as to aim at Kohima, north of Imphal. The 15th Division was deployed to attack Imphal from the east. The 33rd Division on the left wing had already crossed the Chindoween River for deployment aimed at moving into Imphal. They were all ready to swing into action, awaiting orders to go ahead.

The I.N.A. under the command of Netaji was deployed for joint operations with the Japanese Army. Part of the Indian National Army was deployed on the left of the Japanese 33rd Division, ready to fight its way breaking through the Haka-Falam area. The division commanded by Col. Kiani was en route from Singapore to the front via Burma to take part in the operations of the Japanese 15th Division.

Netaji took special efforts to inspect and encourage all troops passing through Rangoon en route to the front.

The Indo-Japanese joint operations came as a complete surprise to the enemy and the crossing of the Chindoween river was a great success. Emboldened by this success, the first-line troops started on a march towards the Indo-Burma border at 9.30 p.m. on 15 March, 1944.

A little earlier, an I.N.A. regiment commanded by Col. Sehgal left the Haka-Falam area for the western Indo-Burma border. Although a little behind schedule, the I.N.A. finally crossed the border and set foot on Indian soil on 18 March, 1944—a red-letter day in the history of the I.N.A. It was indeed a historic occasion.

The Japanese Army also broke through the border on 22 March, fighting against the enemy in spite of geographical and climatic handicaps, and developed a campaign to besiege Imphal.

Netaji announced this momentous news to the world. The statement, issued in Rangoon on 22 March, was flashed back to India.

"The I.N.A., fighting under the command of the Provisional Government of Free India, embarked on its sacred mission with the co-operation of the Japanese Imperial Army. At this historic moment when the Indo-Japanese troops have crossed the border and started marching deep into India, the Provisional Government issues this statement to call the attention of the world to this epochal event.

"Despite the defeat the Indian Army suffered in 1857 at the hands of the British aggressors, the Indian people did not in spirit surrender to the British. Indians have continued to resist the British rule, even though they were disarmed and suppressed. They resorted to agitation, propaganda, terrorism, sabotage, armed insurrection and the Satyagraha or Civil Disobedience launched by Mahatma Gandhi. They have made great strides in their freedom movement. Since the outbreak of the present war, the Indian public and their leaders tried everything they could to win freedom peacefully from Britain, but to no avail. To carry on its imperialistic war Britain tightened its rule over India, subjected Indians to exploitation and brutal oppression, turned India into a huge military base and brought Australian, American, Chungking and Negro troops into the country, thereby imposing an unbearable burden on its impoverished people. The political unrest in India has been greatly accentuated by the famine conditions prevailing in several parts of the country. Such conditions have been largely due to the policy of ruthless exploitation of India's food and other resources for Britain's war purposes over a period of nearly four years.

"As a last attempt to save India from disaster resulting from the war, Mahatma Gandhi urged Britain to accede to India's demand for independence. Britain responded by putting Gandhi and tens of thousands of Indian patriots in jail.

"The three million Indians living in East Asia have become so concerned about the deteriorating conditions inside India that they have resolved to participate in their countrymen's fight for liberation. It is for this purpose that the Indian Independence League was formed and the Indian National Army was brought into being. On 21 October, 1943, the Provisional Government of Free India was born. The Indian National Army launched the fight for the liberation of our motherland in Arakan, Burma.

"As a result of the success of the strategic operations launched by the Indo-Japanese troops in this area, the Indian National Army has crossed the Indo-Burma border and is now advancing towards Delhi. The victory of the Japanese Army since the outbreak of the Greater East Asia War is without a parallel in history and has been a source of inspiration to Indians in East Asia encouraging them to participate actively in the struggle for freedom. The Japanese are fighting in self-defence and also to drive the American and British Imperialism out of East Asia, thus helping us to achieve complete and unconditional independence for India. The Japanese Government repeatedly committed itself to extend full support to India's fight for independence. Upon the formation of the Provisional Government of Free India, Japan forthwith recognized it formally and transferred the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to it.

"The Indian National Army, fighting side by side with the Japanese army, is now engaged in joint operations against the Anglo-American forces and their allies. No freedom for the Indian people and no security in East Asia can be expected unless and until the aggressors are driven out of India. The Anglo-American Imperialism cannot be ended unless it is kicked out of India. Japan has decided to assist India in building the country for Indians. The Provisional Government of Free India hereby declares that it will continue to fight side by side with the Japanese army, until India is completely liberated.

"The Provisional Government of Free India urges the Indian people to give its full support, block the US-British war efforts by resorting to sabotage and co-operate in bringing about the success of the struggle for freedom at the earliest possible date.

"We urge Indian soldiers serving with the British Army to refuse to fight for the ruthless rulers and come over to us. We urge

Indian officials working for the British Government to co-operate with us in fighting this holy war. We assure the Indian people that there is nothing to fear as long as they are not serving as British puppets. We guarantee that we will set up the office of the Provisional Government on the Indian soil in a place liberated from the British rule. We recommend that all Indian people stay away from the US-British airfields, ammunition factories and other military installations so that they will not be hurt as a result of our attack. Brothers and sisters! now is the time for us to realize our long-cherished dream of independence. We can win freedom if you join hands to fight. At this crucial moment, India urges its people to fulfil their duties."

In response, Premier Tojo issued the following statement on 22 March, in which he made it clear that "whatever area the Indian National Army liberated should be placed under the administrative control of the Provisional Government of Free India. It is the aim of Japan to crush the enemy and help to place India under the complete control of the Indian people. Wherever the I.N.A. goes, the Indian people will welcome it with open arms. With their patriotism aroused one area after another will be liberated, ending up with the achievement of independence of the whole of India."

Thus, within nine months of his arrival in Singapore, Bose had reorganised the I.N.A. and moved it from Malaya, via Thailand and Burma, up to the Indian border and had actually led it across the frontier and brought it right onto the Indian soil—an absolutely astounding feat.

Meanwhile, the I.N.A. was valiantly battling on eight sectors of the Burma-India border, on the plains of Imphal and in the neighbourhood of Kohima.

In April, the Japanese Army made rapid progress. The enemy's stronghold in Kohima fell into Japanese hands on 6 April, thanks to its 31st Division. Imphal was being approached by the Japanese 15th Division from the north and the I.N.A.'s Kiani Division from the east, with the Japanese 33rd Division bearing down on it from the south. The Indo-Japanese forces were besieging Imphal and it seemed only a matter of days before it fell, which would have meant the death-knell of the British Empire in India.

Netaji made his proclamation to Indians in liberated territories on 4 April.

It said, "The Provisional Government of Free India is your own government and its sole mission is to drive American and British forces out of our sacred land by the might of arms and then establish a permanent government according to the will of the Indian people. The Provisional Government will carry on its armed struggle until India is completely liberated, and will try its best to reconstruct the liberated territories. The Provisional Government of Free India is the only lawful government of the Indian people. The Provisional Government calls upon the Indian people...to render all assistance and co-operation to the Indian National Army and to the civilian officials appointed by the Provisional Government. The Government guarantees the safety of Indian life and property, but would severely punish those who collaborate with the British or hamper its work. Let the Indian people co-operate with the Japanese Army, the trusted ally of the Provisional Government and of the Indian National Army. Rally round your own Government and thereby help to preserve and safeguard your own liberty."

At this time, Netaji appointed Lt-Col. Chatterjee as the Governor of the liberated territories.

Responding to this proclamation by Netaji, Burmese Premier Ba Maw issued a statement, highlighting the historical significance of the Indian invasion operations, according for special praise for the I.N.A. and emphasizing its spiritual and material significance to the peoples of India and Burma who fought against the British and suffered defeat. He also stressed that "the Japanese-Indian-Burmese troops are fighting side by side with one another to create a new history, with the united Burmese people behind them." Twelve more departments were added to the League Headquarters to cope with the phenomenal increase in its activities as the channel for the execution of the Provisional Government's programme of Total Mobilization of money, materials and manpower.

A Rani of Jhansi Regiment Camp was opened in Rangoon, and camps were opened all over East Asia for the speedy training of Indian civilian youth. These camps turned out soldiers by the thousands after intensive military training.

Netaji established the first National Bank of Azad Hind in Rangoon on 5 April, 1944, and the same day he left for the fighting front and moved his headquarters nearer the firing line. This time he took with him a contingent of fully trained and equipped Ranis of Jhansis.

It was at this time that Japan presented Netaji with an aeroplane.

Netaji proceeded to Maymyo, where the Japanese 15th Army Headquarters used to be located, shifting a part of the Provisional Government with him on 5 April. This move saw his long-cherished desire to take direct command of his firstline troops. However, Netaji later returned to Rangoon, leaving part of the Provisional Government behind.

On 8 April, the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters made the following announcement regarding the military development in Burma:

(a) Our crack troops, fighting side by side with the Indian National Army, captured Kohima early on 6 April.

(b) Our attack on the enemy's airborne troops in the Kata area is moving along smoothly.

However, the situation was already worsening, hanging in balance, the fate of the Indo-Japanese troops. Much of the anxiety was due to the appearance of the enemy's airborne troops which had a tremendous psychological effect on the Indian and Burmese peoples.

In the meantime, Indo-Japanese liberation operations came to a standstill, within three miles of Imphal. The monsoon had already set in, interfering with military operations. Torrential rain washed out the supply routes, injured the health of soldiers and interfered with strategic plans of the Indo-Japanese troops. The torrential rains of Burma submerged the I.N.A.'s supply lines. The I.N.A. was ordered to withdraw, but only to prepare for the next attack on Imphal. This debacle took place on June-July 1944. Suffering from acute malaria and dysentery, the wounded battle-scarred heroes began trekking back to Mandalay and Rangoon.

Some soldiers of the I.N.A. Kiani Division operating in Parel surrendered to the enemy. Netaji wanted to go the front to assess the situation and consulted the Japanese Army. The Japanese Army Commander, however, advised him against it and finally Netaji decided not to.

The adverse turn of events worried the Japanese Army Commander. Both the firstline troops and the logistical units in the rear fought desperately to improve the war situation but to no avail. The Indo-Japanese joint operation seemed to head for failure.

Netaji was planning a reshuffle in the duties of the Provisional Government. He divided his area of activities into three parts. The first part was East Asia, which he would continue to use as his political and military base. The second part was the liberated territories, where effort had to be made to expand civil administration and start reconstruction programmes. The third part was the areas still under the enemy's occupation and on the agenda for liberation by the Indian National Army.

Meanwhile, Indo-Japanese troops, defending Kohima, had to yield to the enemy, which cut off the Kohima-Imphal route. The 15th Army was forced to give up completely its original operational plans. Gen. Kawabe, Commander of the Burma Regional Army, made up his mind to send some of his staff officers to the Southern Army Headquarters in Singapore to report fully on the situation.

It was on 3 July that Gen. Kawabe received a telegram from the Southern Army Headquarters instructing him to go to Manipur and hold the line there.

On 5 July, the Regional Army gave the orders cancelling the Imphal operations entirely. The Japanese 15th Army and the Indian National Army began to pull out of the area after four months of their advance to the front. The long-cherished dream of Netaji to move on to Delhi, seemed shattered.

When the Chief of Staff of the Regional Army Command told Netaji about the cancellation of the Imphal operations, Netaji insisted on being near the Indian border and point blank refused to retreat to any place south of Mandalay. However, the war situation had become too disadvantageous to the Indo-Japanese side and Netaji could not have his way. Netaji sent a message to Mahatma Gandhi apprising him of the situation. The message said, "After the sad demise of Shrimati Kasturba in British custody, it was but natural for your countrymen to be alarmed over the state of your health. For Indians outside India, differences in method are like domestic differences. Even since you sponsored the Independence Resolution at the Lahore Congress in December 1929, all members of the Indian National Congress have had one common goal before them. For Indians outside India, you are the creator of the present awakening in our country. The high esteem in which you are held by patriotic Indians outside India, and by foreign friends of India's freedom, increased a hundredfold when you bravely sponsored the 'Quit India' Resolution in August 1942.

"It would be a fatal mistake on your part to make a distinction between the British Government and the British people. No doubt there is a small group of idealists in Britain—as in the U.S.A.—who would like to see India free. These idealists, who are treated by their own people as cranks, form a microscopic minority. So far as India is concerned, for all practical purposes, the British Government and the British people mean one and the same thing. Regarding the war aims of the U.S.A., I may say that the ruling clique at Washington is now dreaming of world domination. This ruling clique and its intellectual exponents talk openly of the 'American Century'. In this ruling clique, there are extremists who go so far as to call Britain the 49th State of the U.S.A.

"I can assure you, Mahatmaji, that before I finally decided to set out on this hazardous mission, I spent days, weeks and months in carefully considering the pros and cons of the case. Having served my people so long to the best of my ability, I could have no desire to be a traitor, or to give anyone a justification for calling me a traitor. Thanks to the generosity and affection of my countrymen, I had received the highest honour which it was possible for any public worker in India to achieve. I had also built up a party consisting of staunch and loyal colleagues who had implicit confidence in me. By going abroad on a perilous quest, I was risking not only my life and my whole future career, but what was more, the future of my party. If I had the slightest hope that without action from abroad we could win freedom, I would never have left India during a crisis. If I had any hope that within our lifetime we could get another chance—another golden opportunity—for winning freedom, as during the present war, I doubt if I would have set out from home.

"There remains but one question for me to answer with regard to the Axis Powers. Is it possible that I have been deceived by them? I believe it will be universally admitted that the cleverest and the most cunning politicians are to be found amongst Britishers. One who has worked with and fought against British politicians all his life cannot be deceived by any other politicians in the world. If British politicians have failed to coax or coerce me, no other politicians can succeed in doing so. And if the British Government, at whose hands I have suffered long imprisonment, persecution and physical assaults, has been unable to demoralise me, no other power can hope to do so. I have never done anything which could compromise in the least either the honour or the self-respect or the interest of my country.

"There was a time when Japan was an ally of our enemy. I did not come to Japan so long as there was an Anglo-Japanese alliance. I did not come to Japan so long as normal diplomatic relations obtained between the two countries. It was only after Japan took what I considered to be the most momentous step in her history, namely declaration of war on Britain and America, that I decided to visit Japan of my own free will. Like so many of my countrymen, my sympathies in 1937 and 1938 were with Chungking. You may remember that as President of the Congress I was responsible for sending out a medical mission to Chungking in December 1938.

"Mahatmaji, you know better than anybody else how deeply suspicious the Indian people are of mere promises. I would be the last man to be influenced by Japan if her declaration of policy had been mere promises.

"I should now like to say something about the Provisional Government that we have set up here. The Provisional Government has, as its one objective, the liberation of India from the British yoke through an armed struggle. Once our enemies are expelled from India, and peace and order is established, the mission of the Provisional Government will be fulfilled. The only reward that we desire for our efforts, for our suffering and for our sacrifice is the freedom of our motherland. There are many among us who would like to retire from the political field once India is free.

"Nobody would be more happy than ourselves, if by any chance our countrymen at home should succeed in liberating themselves through their own efforts, or if by any chance the British Government accepts your 'Quit India' Resolution and gives effect to it. We are, however, proceeding on the assumption that neither of the above is possible and that an armed struggle is inevitable. India's last war of independence has begun. Troops of the Azad Hind Fauj are now fighting bravely on the soil of India, and in spite of all difficulties and hardships they are pushing forward slowly but steadily. This armed struggle will go on until the last Britisher is thrown out of India and until our tricolour National Flag proudly floats over the Viceroy's House in New Delhi.

Not only Imphal but the Indo-Japanese troops were fighting a losing battle on the Japanese 33rd Division, which was outnumbered by 15 to 1.

The war situation was steadily worsening for the Japanese side. On 18 July the Imperial General Headquarters announced that the Japanese troops on the Saipan Island had faced a complete rout. This was followed by the announcement of the resignation of the Tojo Cabinet.

Despite all these numerous setbacks, Netaji maintained his fighting spirit. Even when he was informed by the Japanese Army Headquarters of the resignation of the Tojo Cabinet, Netaji was confident about the Japanese Government, saying, "It is not hard to believe that the new regime will come up with an even more determined policy to carry on this war."

On 22 April, Netaji sent a message to Premier Koiso, stating that his plans for co-operation with Japan had not changed in any way.

On 30 August, Gen. Kawabe, who had tendered his resignation, was recalled to Tokyo. Before his departure for Japan, Kawabe called on Netaji to take leave. Netaji requested Kawabe to tell the Tokyo Government that irrespective of the war situation, his plans remained the same and that he wanted to see the Hikari Kikan abolished so that he could keep in touch with the Japanese Army directly.

Netaji's Third Visit to Tokyo

In September 1944 Gen. Kimura took over as the Commander of Burma Regional Army. There was no respite from the enemy and the Indo-Japanese forces had no time to fully reorganize themselves. Its powerful Air Force and mechanized troops forced the Indo-Japenese troops to retreat to the line of the Irrawaddi river.

All this did not weaken Netaji's resolve. At the opening of the first Diet session under the Koiso Cabinet, Netaji sent a message to Premier Koiso expressing his unyielding determination. "I hereby declare that we will fight side by side with Japanese and other friendly powers until we win independence by crushing our common enemy." Premier Koiso echoed Bose's sentiments by expressing his determination to crush American and British Imperialism, paid a tribute to the Provisional Government of Free India and the I.N.A. and promised to extend every possible assistance to the Indian independence movement.

Japanese Rear-Admiral Nakado, a Naval attache stationed in Burma, suggested to Netaji that he should abandon the east as the base for India's independence and try to accomplish the purpose from the north by joining forces with Russia. Admiral Nakado offered to go with him to Russia. However, the Supreme Headquarters in Tokyo rejected, the whole idea.

Meanwhile, in India the Indian National Congress leaders were veering towards a compromise with Britain.

Towards the end of October, the Japanese Government decided to confer the highest decoration on Bose. However, much to the surprise of the Japanese Government, Netaji politely turned it down, saying, "I would like to accept it together with my men when we have won independence."

To commemorate the third visit of Netaji to Japan, a meeting was held at the Hibiya Public Hall, Tokyo at 1 p.m. on 3 November, under the auspices of the Japanese Imperial Rule Assistance Association and the Indo-Japanese Society.

Ranking high among the negotiations and arrangements Netaji entered into with the Japanese Government during his third visit to Japan was the Indo-Japanese Loan Agreement. In the past, everytime the Provisional Government of Free India borrowed money from the Japanese Government to cover its own expenses as well as of the I.I.L. and the I.N.A., it wrote an I.O.U. Netaji was not satisfied with this method, and wanted to make a more formal arrangement so that he could prevent Japan from putting India under any obligation after India became a sovereign state. The Japanese Government tentatively accepted his proposal. This Netaji did to demolish any impression that the Provisional Government of Free India was a Japanese puppet, like that of Manchuria.

Though energetic as ever the strain was showing on him. When ex-Premier Tojo saw Netaji for the first time after two and a half years, he expressed his concern about Netaji's health.

The Japanese Army and the I.N.A. suffer defeat

When Netaji returned from Tokyo to the Burmese front towards the end of November, the war situation had worsened, with the sky space completely overtaken by the enemy's air force and the ground by enemy tanks.

Despite being in the midst of heavy enemy bombing attacks day and night, Netaji worked dilligently attending to the affairs of the Provisional Government as well as the Indian National Army, with his headquarters in Rangoon.

Netaji received a setback when Major-General Yamamoto (former Col. Yamamoto) his old and dear friend since his Berlin days, was transferred elsewhere. After Netaji returned to East Asia, Yamamoto, in his capacity as the Director of the Hikari Kikan, was always on his side. The Hikari Kikan itself meant a great deal to Netaji just because of the presence of Yamamoto at its head. Both Bose and Yamamoto were deeply attached to each other.

The day 31 December, 1944 was a black day for Netaji. The British forces finally landed at Akyab. Ironically enough, it was the Akyab-Chittagong route that Netaji had always wished to use to march towards Delhi.

On 23 January, Indian residents in Rangoon held a meeting in celebration of Netaji's birthday and on the occasion, donated gold and other jewels one and a half times his weight.

As the days passed, the war situation steadily deteriorated. On 12 January, the Indo-British 25th Division, supported by heavy bombardment from the sea and the air, started landing on the Miebon Peninsula. As Japanese troops proceeded to counter-attack the enemy's 26th Division landed on the Ramley Island on 26 January. The stage was set for the enemy's full-scale landing operations.

The Japanese 15th Army launched its offensive on the enemy crossing the Irrawaddy River. In early January a battle was fought for the first time on the front north of Mandalay. Later in the same month, the Japanese army attacked the enemy on the Myaungu front. They also attacked the enemy moving on from the area between Sagain and Nugazun. Gen. Kimura, Commander of the Regional Army, was supervising operations in the Nugazun area after proceeding there from his command post in Kalo. The morale of the I.N.A. deployed on the left of the Japanese 15th Army had hit a slump after a series of hard battles. Concerned, Netaji accompanied by General Isoda, Chief of the Hikari Kikan, proceeded to the front to raise the sinking morale of the firstline troops. Major Takahashi, who accompanied Netaji throughout the tour, had this glowing account about Netaji.

"It was towards the end of January that we departed from Rangoon. Netaji personally gave instructions as to the details of the duty assigned to each member of the party. We travelled by car mostly at night to avoid enemy planes. We arrived in Pyinmana on the evening of the second day. The following day, Netaji met the leaders of all the villages in the area and heard from them about the living and other conditions of the inhabitants. Netaji gave instructions to the members of his party to work out plans to help the local population as we went along. One day, he inspected the I.N.A. Women's Corps operating in the vicinity and took lunch with the soldiers. Then he proceeded to inspect the I.N.A. First Division, commanded by Gen. Kiani, in the same area. Gen. Kiani's attitude vis-a-vis Netaji graphically illustrated how much respect his troops had for Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. While inspecting the troops deployed for action, Netaji personally gave instructions and warnings as he saw fit. He kept himself busy all day long.

"After leaving Pyinmana, we kept on moving forward. We would take a rest in an Indian settlement. We avoided resting on the roads for fear of attack from enemy planes. When we took rest during the daytime, Netaji never went inside any house. Instead, he hung a hammock between trees and lay down on it, reading a book on the history of Irish independence.

"Early in February, we arrived in Meiktila. After collecting intelligence, we proceeded to an Indian hamlet, 60 km southwest of Meiktila, where we learnt that two companies of the Indian National Army had surrendered to the enemy and the whole battalion was withdrawing to the rear. On learning this, Netaji insisted on going to the furthest front to cheer up the troops there. We advised him against going that far because of the danger of being caught by the enemy tanks in the area. He brushed aside our advice, saying, 'Since the British tanks would move through the main roads, there is no need to worry'. He also indicated that he could not bear the thought that he, the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian National Army, came thus far for the encouragement of his troops and would not go further to the front because of personal danger. We also suggested that he should refrain from going further to the front until such time as the Battalion Commander had finished regrouping his troops, so that the latter's face would be saved. Netaji still insisted. Eventually, Col. Kiani and Major Takahashi proposed that Netaji should decide whether to go on or not after having investigated whether the area was not infested with enemy tanks. It was at this time that Netaji issued orders replacing the First Division Commander by Col. Kiani.

"During the three weeks of our inspection tour, Netaji had to replace three aides-de-camp. They were all overcome with exhaustion. Netaji put in a long day's work in meeting local Indians and inspecting troops and military facilities. I do not think he slept more than four hours a day, and the strain finally told on his aides-de-camp. Netaji decided to withdraw the I.N.A. Women's Corps from Pyinmana to Rangoon. All the trucks were overloaded with them. One of the trucks broke down on the way. Netaji jumped out of his car and personally inspected their transportation. He may have taken the trouble of doing this out of consideration for women soldiers and as a safeguard against possible accidents at night. In any event, we were deeply impressed by his heart-warming action, which was in sharp contrast with what a Japanese General would have done on such an occasion."

Despite no formal training in soldiering Netaji took military or strategic decisions as promptly and effectively as any professional strategist. Soon news reached Netaji that a group of I.N.A. soldiers had surrendered to the enemy. On hearing this, Netaji issued, in the middle of February, a proclamation, telling the whole I.N.A. that "anyone who attempts to retreat should be shot to death". This gave a shot in the arm to the I.N.A.'s sagging morale and there were no more instances of surrender. The Japanese Army was impressed by the influence Netaji had over the I.N.A.

Meanwhile, the enemy, had crossed the Irrawaddy River, built breach-heads in Myaungu and also in Pakok. Intending to strike at the enemy while it was in the process of crossing the river and destroy it in the area south of Mandalay, the Japanese Regional Army carried out their attack. However, the mission was a failure. Meiktila fell into enemy hands on 23 February.

Compounding their woes, one Japanese division was pulled out of the Burmese front and sent to the Philippines. Since the enemy had landed on the seaboard area the defence of Rangoon, the capital of Burma was threatened. At this point, it was decided to throw the Burmese National Defence Army into action for the first time since it was formed.

The Burmese National Defence Army had been trained over the years under the guidance of the Japanese Army.

To the utter shock of the Japanese, the Burmese Army turned against the Japanese Army even before they reached the front, and attacked the logistical facilities of the Japanese Army on the way in the latter part of March. The Burmese revolt came as a big shock to the Japanese Army.

Almost simultaneously, a number of Burmese military Academy students escaped and attacked Japanese Army's supply depots in Rangoon. There were, however, quickly overpowered by the Rangoon Capitol Division made up mostly of Japanese.

All in all, the Burmese National Defence Army compared very unfavourably with the I.N.A., headed by Netaji, who stuck with the Japanese until the very end.

On 20 April, Gen. Kimura announced to Netaji his intention to withdraw from Rangoon. But Netaji flatly rejected the idea of withdrawal. After prolonged discussions, Netaji finally capitulated.

After ensuring the safe withdrawal of the eighty members of the Women's Corps, Netaji left Rangoon by car for Moulmein on the night of 23 April. It was also decided to leave behind some of the top officials of the Provisional Government and Major General Loganadhan in Rangoon to take charge of the remaining troops.

Netaji and his party left Rangoon for Moulmein which they reached in about week. The roads were congested with troops withdrawing from the front. It was towards the end of April that they arrived in Moulmein.

After arriving in Moulmein, and after ascertaining that the I.N.A. had been withdrawn without a hitch, he left Burma for Bangkok on 9 May. Between Moulmein and Bangkok, he travelled by a vehicle, accompanied by some of his Cabinet members and some Japanese including Minister Minetani and Lt.-General Isoda of the Hikari Kikan. They were escorted by a squad of Indian soldiers and five Japanese military policemen. He travelled mostly by night to avoid air-raids. The roads were bad made worse by the onset of the monsoons. The three weeks were packed with forced marches, blistered feet, hunger, thirst, hairbreadth escapes from enemy fighters and bombers, and perilous crossings of big rivers.

Netaji reached Bangkok in mid-May 1945, after the surrender of Germany to the Allied forces, and where he was warmly received by a group of staff officers of the Southern Army Headquarters, who had been sent there by Field Marshal Terauchi to receive Netaji. He was overwhelmed by the kindness of Terauchi. Among these staff officers was Admiral Nakado, who once suggested to Netaji that he establish contact with Russia.

Having settled in at Bangkok, Netaji began seriously thinking of his next course of action. Though he was indebted to the Japanese, he felt a major change of plans was called for.

Japan, however, continued to fight.

Netaji had long sessions with his Ministers, drawing up plans for the continuance of the INA's fight against the British.

At this stage, in June 1945, news reached Netaji that the British Viceroy in India, Lord Wavell, was trying to persuade Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress to give up opposition and to cooperate in Britain's war effort in return for the inclusion of more Indians in the Viceroy's Executive Council.

Though initially Mahatma Gandhi was willing to adopt his usual open-minded stand to end the conflict between the alien Government and the Congress representing the Indian nation, he later withdrew from the scene and left it to the President of the Congress, Maulana Azad, advised by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, to speak for the Congress at the Simla Conference in June-July 1945.

On learning about the Wavell offer, Netaji flew from Bangkok to Singapore on June 18 and issued a broadcast over the Radio to the Congress leaders night after night for nearly a month, imploring them, not to accept the Wavell offer. His most important argument to turn down the Wavell offer was that it was a typical British stratagem to keep the Indian question a domestic issue of the British Empire.

Netaji's joy knew no bounds when he heard the news of the failure of the Simla Conference where the Congress finally rejected the Wavell offer.

He then left on a hurried tour of Malaya and was camping in Seramban when news reached him that Russia had declared war on Japan; this was soon followed by a midnight visit of certain League officials from Singapore to Netaji's camp on August 11 with the news that Japan had surrendered.

This was the darkest hour for the I.N.A., for it would be meaningless for the I.N.A. to go alone in the war any longer. If the Japanese had decided to surrender throughout East Asia, it would be suicidal for the I.N.A. to continue the fight alone.

And, so, militarily, the I.N.A. was forced to surrender.

The unparalleled sufferings and sacrifices of Netaji and the I.N.A. in the cause of India's freedom had evoked the respect and admiration of the Japanese, Chinese, Burmese, Thais, Malays, Filipinos, Indonesians and Vietnamese. The South East Asian nations, who were under colonial rule at the outbreak of the Pacific war, and who then witnessed the flight of their rulers from the advancing Japanese forces, were stirred to the depths of their being by the spectacle of the revolutionary Indian Independence Movement and the patriotic Indian National Army under the dynamic leadership of Netaji. The Burmese, the Malays, the Indonesians and the Vietnamese took a solemn pledge that they would be free for all time and would not allow their ex-rulers to return to their lands as rulers again after the war.

Netaji immediately rushed back to Singapore, and issued elaborate instructions to the civilian and army wings of the Provisional Government as to their future. And, he agreed at the very last moment on the insistent wish of his cabinet ministers, to leave Singapore and move further East. He was determined to contact the Russians in Manchuria and move on to Moscow so that he might be free one day to carry on the war of India's liberation.

Japan's surrender was officially announced on August 15.

Death of Netaji

In compliance with Netaji's request Field-Marshal Terauchi, sympathizing fully with Netaji's point of view, decided, on his own responsibility, to accede to Netaji's request despite stiff resistance from the Imperial General Headquarters. Terauchi arranged for Netaji to fly by a special aeroplane to Shinkyo, Manchuria, together with Lt.-General Shidei, who had just been appointed as the Chief-of-Staff of the Kwantung Army and was waiting for transportation n Saigon to go to Manchuria. They were to fly to Dairen first via Taipeh. Little did anyone know that this was the very plane that crashed in Taipeh on its way to Dairen, resulting in the death of Netaji. Netaji's plan was to fly to Shinkyo, Manchuria in order to surrender to the Russian Army and then to decide how best he could achieve his ultimate objective. He was to take off for Shinkyo on 17 August.

The Hikari Kikan, however, opposed the idea of sending Netaji alone to Manchuria considering that he was the Chief of the Provisional Government. They insisted on sending at least one of his Cabinet members to accompany him. Accompanied by a small party of trusted lieutenants, Netaji flew from Singapore to Bangkok on August 16, then onto Saigon the next morning. The only Indian who accompanied him on this flight from Saigon onAugust 17, 1945 was Colonel Habib-ur-Rahman, Deputy Chief of Staff of I.N.A.

The take-off was again delayed by about an hour because Netaji's personal effects had to be sorted out. When the plane was just about to take off, one Indian showed up and said to Netaji, "We would like to present Netaji something on behalf of the 3-

million Indians living in East Asia. It will get here in a few minutes. So, please postpone the take-off until its arrival." In about fifteen minutes, they brought two suitcases containing something heavy.

The Tragedy as described by Hyashida

The build-up to the tragic finale

The aircraft that crashed was a heavy bomber (Model 97-2-Sally) belonging to the Japanese Third Air Force. The plane took off from the Saigon Aerodrome at around 5.30 p.m. on 17 August, 1945 and stopped over in Tourane en route, where Netaji and his party stayed overnight at the Morim Hotel. In taking off from the Saigon Aerodrome, the plane had to taxi the entire distance of the runway before becoming airborne. This meant that the plane was overloaded. Therefore, prior to take off from Tourane, co-pilot Major Takizawa, Major Kono and other Indian and Japanese officers insisted on their unloading 12 machine-guns and some ammunition. This lightened the load by 600 kg. They took off at about 5 a.m. the following morning. Before they arrived in Taipeh, information was received that the Russians had occupied Port Arthur, and it was feared that they might be in Dairen before long. It became all the more necessary to reach there as quickly as possible. The weather was perfect. They arrived at the Taipeh Aerodrome at about noon. A tent had been pitched at the aerodrome for the Japanese Prince Kanin, who was expected to pass through Taipeh on his way to convey the Emperor's orders for Japanese Armed Forces to surrender. The Prince was to represent the Emperor in persuading the Japanese Armed Forces in the continent and southern islands who were against the surrender. They took rest for about two hours, during which they refuelled the plane and also took a light lunch of sandwiches and bananas. They also had to check the engines of the plane. The checking was done by the pilot, Major Kono and Capt. Nakamura, who was the Maintenance Officer of the Airbase. As Major Kono found the left engine defective, the pilot Major Takizawa tested the engine twice. Afterwards, they confirmed its airworthiness. After that all the passengers, after having their lunch and rest, took their seats again in the same seating order as before. Then, the plane taxied to one end of the runway. Having reached the point, the engines were geared up to the maximum speed and then slowed down. This was a normal procedure which all Japanese planes followed to test the fitness of the engines. After the engines had been tested and found in good order, the plane was speeded and allowed to taxi on the runway. The length of the runway was 890 metres. In the case of heavy bombers, normally the tail gets lifted halfway down the runway but in this case, the tail was not lifted off the ground until it had run approximately three-fourths down the runway, according to Capt. Nakamura. The plane took off and made a steep ascent when a loud explosion was heard and the plane tilted to the left. The propeller and the port engine fell out and the plane dived the ground. Unexpectedly, the curtain came down on the life of one of the most fearless and sacrifices leaders of the national freedom struggle.

Crew and passengers

(1) Pilot	W/O Aoyagi (Third Air Force)
(2) Associate Pilot	Major Takizawa (on transfer to Mainland, Japan)
(3) Navigator	Sgt. Okita
(4) Radio operator	N.C.O. Tominaga
(5) Gun operator	Unidentified N.C.O.
(6) Lt.Gen. Shidei	Chief of Staff, Burmese Army Command
(7) Lt.-Col. Sakai	Staff Officer
(8) Lt.-Col. Shiro Nonogaki	Staff Officer, Japan Air Force
(9) Major Taro Kono	Staff Officer, Japan Air Force
(10) Major Iwao Takahashi	Staff Officer
(11) Capt. Keikichi Arai	Air Force Engineer
(12) Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose	
(13) Col. Rehman (Adjutant)	

REFERENCES

1. This was Abid Hassan's observation.
2. Gaimusho, p. 99.

11

Commander-in-Chief of the Azad Hind Fauj

Anthem of The Provisional Government of Netaji

Subh sukh chain ki barkha barse Bharat bhag hai jaga,
Punjab Sindh Gujrat Maratha Dravid Utkal Banga
Chanchal Sagar Bindh Himala neela Jamna Ganga,
        Tere nit gun gae,
        Tujhse jeewan pae,
        Sab tan pae asha;
Suraj ban kar jag par chamke Bharat nam Subhaga,
        Jai-ya ho, Jai-ya ho, Jai-ya ho,
        Jai-ya Jai-ya Jai-ya Jai-ya ho!
Sab ke dil men prit basae teri mithi bani,
Har sube ke rahne wale har mazhab ke prani,
        Sab bhed-o-farak mita ke,
        Sab god me teri ake,
        Goondhen prem ki mala;
Suraj ban kar jag par chamke Bharat nam Subhaga,
        Jai-ya ho, Jai-ya ho, Jai-ya ho,
        Jai-ya Jai-ya Jai-ya Jai-ya ho!
Subah savere pankh pakheru tere hi gun gaen,
Bas bhari bharpoor hawaen jeewan men rut laen,
        Sab mil kar Hind Pukare,
        Jai Azad Hind ke nare,
        Piara desh hamara,

Suraj ban kar jag par chamke Bharat nam Subhaga,
Jai-ya ho, Jai-ya ho, Jai-ya ho,
Jai-ya Jai-ya Jai-ya Jai-ya ho!
Bharat nam subhaga!

(May happiness and peace fall as rain on the soil of India
the country's fortunes are on the rise.
Punjab, Sindh, Gujarat, Maratha, Dravida, Orissa and Bengal
Restless ocean, Vindhyas and Himalayas,
the blue waters of the Yamuna and Ganga,
Sing songs of your glory
And get life and hope from you.
We wish the name of our country will shine like a sun in the world,
Bharat is a beautiful name.
Victory, Victory, Victory,
Victory, Victory, Victory to Thee.
May your sweet voice increase love in the hearts of everyone,
people of every province and the followers of different religions.
When people come and sit in your lap
they forget all their differences and love each other.
We wish the name of our country will shine like sun a in the world,
Bharat is a beautiful name.
Victory, Victory, Victory,
Victory, Victory, Victory to Thee.
From morning to evening, the birds sing songs of your glory,
your sweet and pleasant blowing winds cheer the lives of the people.
Let us together call the name of this great country,
Victory to free India this is our slogan
This is our beloved country.
We wish the name of our country will shine like a sun in the world,
Victory, Victory, Victory,
Victory, Victory, Victory to Thee
Bharat is a beautiful name.)

The Pillar of Pledge

"Jai Hind" is our National Salutation, as Indian meets Indian;

The *Tricolour* with the Charkha is our National Flag;

Tagore's song *Jaya-ho* has become our National Anthem;

The Tiger, with its association with Tipu Sultan assumes the position of our Emblem;

"Chalo Delhi" is our War cry, and *Inquilab Zindabad* and *Azad Hind Zindabad* are our slogans;

"Viswas—Ekta—Balidan"
Faith—Unity—Sacrifice—is our Motto.

Arzi Hakumat-e-Azad Hind
(*Provisinal Government of Free India*)

G.M. College of Education
Raipur, Bantalab
Jammu.
Acc. No. 5807
Dated 15.5.03

The Marching Song of the I.N.A.

Kadam kadam badhaye ja, Khushi ke git gaye ja;
Yeh jindagi hai kom ki, Tu kom pai lutaye ja!
Tu Sher-e-Hind age badh, Marne se fir bhi tu na dar;
Asman tak oothake sar, Joshe watan badhaye ja!
Teri himmat badhti rahe, Khuda teri sunta rahe;
Jo samne tere chade, To khak men milaye ja!
Chalo Dilli pukarke, Komi nishan sambhal ke;
Lal Kile gadhke, Lahraye ja, lahraye ja!

(Let us march together, singing songs of happiness
This life is only for the country, You sacrifice it for the country
You have to surge forward like a lion, Do not be afraid of death
You have to reach out to the sky, You have to increase the spirit of patriotism in the people
May your courage ever remain steadfast, God will listen to your prayers
If the enemy comes in your way, You have to soundly defeat him
'Onward to Delhi' should be your cry, You have to save the nation
and Unfurl your tricolour flag on the Red Fort)

Netaji - The Gentle Revolutionary

Undoubtedly, Netaji was one of the greatest revolutionaries of the world who has left an indelible imprint on the hearts of people during his lifetime, winning India's freedom was the prime concern of the people. But what that concept of freedom was, was still hazy. Many Congressmen including Gandhiji had accepted "Dominion Status", as the goal of freedom struggle. Netaji was all for "Poorna Swaraj" (complete independence). He was the first to advocate socio-economic emancipation of Indian masses as the second step towards Freedom. Planned development, accompanied by spiritual enrichment and family planning were the panacea which he prescribed for India's ills. He strongly believed in bringing women into the Freedom Struggle and assigning them a role which was equal to the men.

The Rani of Jhansi Regiment

It was on his perilous submarine journey in the German 'U' boat that he thought to set up a regiment in the name of Rani of Jhansi. On arrival in South East Asia and taking over the command of the I.N.A. the first step which he took was to organise the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. On 21 October, 1943, the Rani of Jhansi Regiment Training were started.

The Ranis, as the members of this Regiment were called, came from various countries of Asia—Burma, Cambodia, China, Laos, Malaya, Phillipines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. Despite their diverse—ethnic, linguistic, religious and social background, they constituted a cohesive and formidable disciplined force filled with deep commitment, courage and tenacity. An all-women regiment was something new and the Ranis evoked great curiosity and admiration for their qualities of dedication, uprightness and selfless service. Japanese who initially entertained reservations for this Force later admired it. Even the British military authorities in India took notice of this Regiment. General Auchinleck the Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces in India called it "The Amazon Force". On the war front Ranis fought shoulder to shoulder with their male compatriots, and brought great laurels to themselves and to their legendary Regiment. The Auxillary force rendered unparalleled dedicated service in Field and Base Hospitals of the I.N.A.

In Singapore, Netaji himself declared the camp open was on that day provided with a guard of honour consisting of young women smartly clad in khaki uniforms. The presence of this small detachment who had been undergoing part-time military training for two months before the opening of the camp, convinced observers that the Rani of Jhansi Regiment had indeed become a reality. In Singapore, the first detachment of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment which, to begin with, consisted of one company only, started training on the 23rd of October, 1943. Though none of them had any prior military training due to differences in educational qualifications, the women were divided into future officers, N.C.Os and sepoys. The girls were divided into sections and platoons. The majority of the volunteers consisted of the daughters, sisters and wives of petty tradesmen, estate workers and men of the lower middle class. Most of these girls were either completely illiterate or semi-literate.

Most of them had never stepped outside the four walls of their homes, and life was little more other than the drudgery of household duties. Yet, virtually overnight they transformed from doormats to women of courage, and adopted a life about which they knew absolutely nothing. Yet their ignorance and simplicity made them put complete trust in Netaji. Not even for a moment did they doubt the wisdom of his words, and even later when bitter defeat overtook them, they never once faltered or regretted the step they had taken. To them it was a new life, for it meant not merely an escape from their monotonous lives, but a life with a purpose. They felt that they had something to live for, and if necessary to die for. In addition to the women from humble backgrounds there were also a number of young women from comfortable homes. In spite of their education they would inevitably have had to face lives of placid domesticity. When they joined hands with Netaji, it was not as though they were exchanging drudgery for adventure. They came, fully realizing the magnitude of the step they were taking. Among these young women who came forward with such spirit and devotion the majority had never even seen the motherland for whose liberation they were ready to lay down their lives. And yet they were Indians to the core; Indians who in distant lands had been able to forget all differences of caste and creed; Indians who had been shamefully exploited and had no redress for their grievances; and above all

Indians who knew that unless the motherland was free, there was no hope of a fair deal for her nationals abroad.

Training the Regiment

The Rani of Jhansi Regiment Training Camp was run on strict military lines, perfect discipline being maintained from its inception. All the cooking, cleaning, etc., was done by the volunteers themselves. Weekly duties were assigned so that the work was equally distributed. There were some elderly women who volunteered as camp cooks, and these women too, at their own instance, took part in Physical Training, Route March, etc. Some of the more enthusiastic of them even learnt to handle rifles expertly. The were ready to move to the front and always carried rifles. The training was given by a detachment of Officers and N.C.O's who had specially selected from Infantry Regiments of the Azad Hind Fauj. From its very inception, the officers and men of the Fauz had worked in total cooperation and saw to it that the members of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment were given the best training possible. Those who saw it were full of praises for these war-toughened veterans who had learnt their soldiering the hard and bitter way, and who patiently put the girls through their paces. Many of the volunteers were clumsy. Many were slow and dull. But all of them, instructors and pupils alike, were bound by one feeling, an intense pride of having the proud privilege of being soldiers in Netaji's Army of Liberation, and they were determined at all costs to uphold the honour of that Army.

The training began at 6 a.m. every morning with the hoisting of the national Tri-colour, at which every member of the camp was present, ready for the day's work. Then followed physical training from 6-15 to 7 a.m. Breakfast was at 7.30 a.m., and at 8 a.m. everyone was on the paradeground. The next two hours were spent in military training consisting of squad drill, and training in the handling and maintaining of arms. After two hours of rigorous training the next two hours were devoted to leisure, when the volunteers were free to do their own washing and cleaning. After lunch at 12 noon there was another half an hour leisure, followed by two hours of classroom work. In the first hour Romanized Hindustani was taught. This was most important as Hindustani was the official language of the I.N.A. and all words of command and orders were given in Hindustani. The majority of the volunteers in the Rani of Jhansi Regiment as well as the civilian recruits in the I.N.A. were South Indians to whom Hindi was almost a foreign language. Yet within the short space of three months, they all had a working knowledge of the language and some of the officers and N.C.O.'s were even able to give instructions in the tongue. The other hour of the classroom period involved lectures on Geography and the Political History of India.

All the so-called advantages of the British rule in India mentioned in the British textbooks facts were exposed and a true picture of the exploitation of India by British Imperialism was made known. The true story of the 1857 struggle was taught, and the rise and growth of the Indian National Congress were made familiar to all the volunteers. Later on, an N.C.O.'s cadre course was started and the theoretical side of military training with subject like Map-Reading, Strategy, Tactics, etc., was taught.

The two hours of class work was followed by the two more hours of outdoor training. The day ended with the roll-call, bringing down of the flag and the National Anthem. Dinner was at 7 p.m. and after that an hour was spent on friendly discussion, talks on current events or in music. Though for maintaining discipline there was the division into Officers, N.C.O.'s and Sepoys, these divisions were not so obvious because of the spirit of comradeship and fellow-feeling that existed.

Once squad drill and the handling of small arms was mastered, the outdoor work consisted more of Route Marches, and preparing and executing schemes of attack and defences, guerillas tactics, night marches, etc. The physical strain which seemed enormous at first gradually became almost imperceptible as muscles grew tough and the system got used to and even relished the regular hours of exercise and the simple but wholesome food.

Although the Rani of Jhansi Regiment began only as a detachment one company strong, new recruits were joining everyday until finally there were one thousand trained women soldiers. For a population of 3 million Indians and considering the conditions under which it was raised, it is no mean achievement.

In addition to the combatants, there was also a very fine Nursing Corps. These nurses were trained in the I.N.A. hospitals in Singapore and Rangoon and later sent to work in from line hospitals, where they rendered valuable service in looking after the sick and the wounded. These nurses were subjected to the same rigours as the combatants. Often their hospitals were bombarded by air raids and artillery fire.

On the completion of four months' military training the first passing out parade of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment was held in Singapore in March, 1944. Before the final parade, examinations were held. On the practical side was the Range practice. Even some of the sceptical Japanese officers turned out to see the women soldiers fire their first shots, and they were quite taken aback at the accuracy and marks-manship displayed. The passing-out-parade the next day was the final surprise. Unfortunately Netaji was not present, being somewhere on the Burma front, making the final preparations for the assault on Imphal, and the Chief of Staff of the I.N.A. took the salute. All the High-ranking officers of the I.N.A., the Japanese officers and the public of Singapore were present and witnessed the long column of Indian women march smartly past. It was difficult to imagine that these stalwart, upright, brisk women were once fragile, delicate, ill-nourished Indian women who had responded to the call of the Netaji. Only he had then appreciated their worth, and they had today proved themselves worthy of that appreciation. After this passing-out-parade, these newly created women soldiers were absorbed into the I.N.A. on the same footing as their brother officers and pledged to the same goal viz., the achievement of the complete Independence of India.

Going to the Front

After training, this first batch of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, set out from Singapore with the cry of "Chalo Delhi" on their lips, the first stage of the journey from Malaya to Thailand (Siam) was comparatively simple, though they travelled in cattle trucks. Then began the dangerous part along the newly-constructed Thailand-Burma Railway through the dense forests and over the hills of the Thai-Burma Frontier. During the day, the railway track was the target of enemy bombers, so the journey was generally undertaken under the cover of night, the day being spent is hiding. During this journey they saw the hundreds of Indian labourers who were working on the railway and who had put their blood and sweat into building it.

In Burma, the Azad Hind Fauj went into action on the Indo-Burma border, full of hope and courage, fighting under the most desperate conditions and despite gaining their way inch by inch, found itself up against overwhelming odds. Nature, too, was against the I.N.A. The torrential monsoon burst on them, and yet they clung on without food, shelter, with nothing but their indomitable spirit to keep them going. Knowing that to carry on under such conditions would be self-destructive, Netaji ordered the I.N.A. to retreat back into Burma. The first detachment of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment reached Burma just at the time when the retreat had started. However, they carried on with training, trying to increase their stamina and capacity to bear physical strain. In particular they devoted most of their time in learning the art of guerrilla and jungle warfare. In addition, several exceptionally spirited young women volunteered for suicide squads and special service work, hoping that the tide of battle would turn in our favour. But that did not happen.

Order to Retreat

In April, 1945, the Rani of Jhansi regiment, too, had to retreat as ordered by Netaji. They began their retreat even as the enemy was not on their heels. All means of transport had to be abandoned due to the continuous aerial bombardment. For days the tramped through the jungle, being unable even to cook their food for fear of smoke giving away their position. One night they were surrounded by enemy guerrillas, who fired blindly at them, killing two of their number and injuring three others. They retaliated by opening fire on all sides, and the guerillas fearing they would be surrounded by a vastly superior force retreated. Finally, the Regiment reached Thailand and from there proceeded back to Singapore. When Netaji left Malaya on his last trip he gave orders that the Rani of Jhansi Regiment be disbanded and the members be allowed to return to their own homes. This order was met and obeyed with great reluctance as they would have preferred by far to be taken as prisoners of war along with their brothers of the I.N.A.

When he formed the "Provisional Government of Free India" on 23 October, 1943 he took Captain Lakshmi Swaminathan a spirited young lady doctor of Singapore as one of the Ministers, and constituted Women's Department. Women occupied several important positions in the P.G.F.I. apparatus. Smt. Hem Batai was a member of Board of Directors of the National Bank of Azad Hind, the flourishing banking outfit of the P.G.F.I. She had donated her entire fortune of over rupees fifty lakhs to the P.G.F.I. and was the recipient of "Sevak-e-Hind" the highest civilian award of the P.G.F.I. Capt. Janaki Thever was one of the A.D.Cs. of Netaji, I.I.L.—the political arm of the movement—had several prominent women of Indian origin in Burma as well as Singapore.

For Netaji work was akin to worship. He worked tirelessly 22 hours per day, forging the strongest enduring bonds of a common Nationhood amongst the Indians of South East Asia. He awakened their slumbering patriotic sentiments.

Some historians have opined that Subhas had in him the making of an Indian De Valera. He possessed the same steely determination, the same spirit of restlessness, of sacrifice and of devotion to the country's cause as did the great Irish leader. Immensely resourceful and far-sighted, he was blessed with the capacity to work and inspire enthusiasm for an object on which he sets his heart. His gift for organization is almost unrivalled. Though an idealist, he never ignored practical considerations.

The Azad Hind Fauj (The Indian Legion)

Although Bose dreamt of freeing his country from British enslavement, he had no definite plan of organising a national army in Germany to fight the war for India's freedom. However, like other national leaders he had always cherished "the patriotic desire of giving Indian young men military training, and wished to have at their command a national militia, in order either to free the country from bondage or to protect the same against foreign invaders or for both purposes."

According to Bose "the poor Indian farmers worked, laboured and even starved sometimes, to feed and clothe the army which was at times used against his own kith and kin when they began to demand their country's freedom."

Almost every nationalist Indian was conscious of this anomaly and felt the necessity of a national army devoted to the cause of India. Bose had always nursed a feeling that:

"Indian must have a National Army that should reach the standards of the most successful and modern army of the world, in discipline, training and equipment, in order to be able to fight for freedom and to defend it after it was won."

His idea of an Indian National Army cryptallised in Germany after he met a group of Indian prisoners of war, who were brought to Berlin, by the Radio Department to listen to and translate the Hindustani programmes. It was after meeting them that he worked out a scheme "for utilising this valuable young Indian material for some better purpose, useful for the country, if not immediately, at least at a later date. He could not tolerate such fine material rotting in the prisoner's camps.

Accordingly, Bose gave his proposal to the German Government to create an Indian Legion from amongst the Indian prisoners of war in Germany. The German authorities were not two favourably disposed towards such a proposal initially and they expressed their scepticism about Bose. There were some obstacles but later the "Germans ultimately welcomed the idea, as a far-sighted policy." One bone of contention was the name of the body of troops which Netaji wanted to call the Indian National Army. The Germans were not willing to accord it the status of an independent army. It was decided that Netaji's army would be called Indian Legion.

Bose threw himself tirelessly and courageously into organising the Legion. He contacted the military authorities, initially, through the Foreign Office and then directly. In spite of several difficulties "he never lost courage or patience."

Walter Harbich met him in the Hotel Esplanade and had detailed discussions with him as the first German Officer of the Commando Unit. In January 1942, Harbich received the Commission to raise a training unit in the Camp at Regenwurm, for the Indian Army of volunteers. In this connection Bose also met Adalbert Seifriz, with whom he very soon developed intimate relations. The role Seifriz played in acting according to the wishes of Bose and the attending to the interests of the Indian Legion, is really noteworthy. Another controversial issue between Bose and the Germans centred around the soldiers, Oath of Allegiance. To whom should the Indian Legion swear allegiance? Germany had agreed that all enemies of Germany need not be regarded as the enemies of Netaji's Army. However, no arms could be issued to soldiers who had not taken the Oath of Allegiance to the Head of the German state. On 29 November, 1941, a written agreement was signed between Netaji and HerrVon Ribentrop. Netaji put his four point military programme into action. This programme was directed chiefly at the creation of an armed force by recruitment from among the Indian Prisioners of War held by the Axis Powers.

The recruitment for the Indian Legion started among the prisoners of war in Germany and North Africa. Before starting the campaign for recruitment. Bose visited the POW camp at Annaberg which had about ten thousand Indian POWs. He spoke to many of them personally and came to the "conclusion that there was enough enthusiasm amongst the captured soldiers to form out of them a military unit capable of fighting the British later on."

The Indian Legion was first started with a group of twelve young men who were given military training by the Germans. Bose did not let it dampen his enthusiasm and he continued his effort to convince the soldiers and in the course of his speeches and discussions in the POW camp on the second day he appealed to them to volunteer to fight and sacrifice their lives for the sacred cause of India's freedom. Despite the critical attitude of some of the officers hundreds of prisoners of war volunteered to join the Indian Legion. Bose never agreed to compromise on principles to attract the prisoners of war and "demanded a clear allegiance towards a Free India as well as an absolute readiness to undergo sacrifices for this purpose."

On 25 December, 1941, a meeting of all the Indian residents of Berlin was held in the office of the Azad Hind Centre to give the first batch of fifteen soldiers a hearty send-off to their first headquarters at Frankenburg. The Oath of Allegiance for the legionaires was administered by a German officer in Netaji's presence. The oath, which was in German, said:

"I swear by God this holy oath, that I will obey the leader of the German State and people, Adolf Hitler as Commander of the German Armed Forces, in the fight for the freedom of India, in which fight our leader is Subhas Chandra Bose, and that as a brave soldier, I am willing to lay down my life for this oath."

Netaji rounded off the oath-taking ceremony with a vow on his part. He said: "I shall lead the army when we march to India together."

This had a meaning for the Indian soldier. He knew then that whatever loyalty theoretically he might have towards the head of the German State, on the battlefield, at any time, his duty would be to obey Netaji and none else. From the German side there was no objection to this qualified allegiance, which was an anomaly, because the head of the German State also, by accepting the allegiance of the Indian soldiers in the fight for the freedom of their country, had owned the responsibility to fight for that freedom- a duty which he had no intention of discharging.

This was officially the date of launching the Indian Legion project. For about a whole year after this Netaji would continue to work strenuously for recruitment to the Legion by addressing more POWs at different camps till the legionaries numbered about 3700—the strength, approximately of four battalions. Further recruitment was then stopped. One obvious reason was more expenditure which could be considered unnecessary. Later, after the German defeat at Stalingrad and the Allied victory at El Alamein, all further ideas of increasing the size of the Legion were definitely abandoned.

By August, 1942, more than 2000 Prisoners of War had joined the Indian Legion. The Legion was an important military undertaking with hardly any military objective in view, so far as the German Government was concerned. As for Netaji, it would indeed be rash to say the same thing. The man who planned to keep within range of availability a band of mercenary troops in Europe for use in time of war several years later, certainly had patience and believed in being ready for rare opportunities coming his way at unexpected moment. His advantages were extraordinary resourcefulness, readiness to take risk at crucial moments and total absence of anxiety for his own safety. But all these factors could not undo the distance of some five thousand miles between Berlin and the western frontier of India. The Legion must be quartered at a place which was closer to India. But could this ever be possible?

The I.N.A. was infused with a spirit of nationalism. Netaji's I.N.A. was a symbol of patriotism. It was composed exclusively of the Indians, irrespective of caste, race or religion.[1] Its only objective was to supplement the national struggle going on within India, achieve national Independence and establish national sovereinity.[2] It can be said that the I.N.A. movement and the Congress national movement were two links in the same chain of the struggle for Independence of India. Subhas declared, "I, Subhas Chandra Bose, will continue this sacred war of freedom till the last breath of my life." Thus the I.N.A. was a truly national revolutionary army. Netaji wanted to open two more centres of his Azad Hind movement in Europe, one at Paris and the other at Sofia. The preference for Bulgaria's capital may be due to his earlier acquaintance with the agencies which could help in the recruitment of mercenary troops; but it was certainly favoured for its location - one thousand miles to the south-east of Berlin.

Frankenburg, where the first batch of legionaries were quartered, was a temporary establishment, and by the middle of 1942 all Netaji's men had been shifted to the garrison town of Koenningsbrueck in East Germany which was the country's biggest military training centre.

Weathering the initial setbacks, the Legion reached the strength of four battalions towards December, 1942. On 28 January, 1943, the First Official manoeuvre was held with three battalions in honour of Bose. Colonel Yamamoto, Bose's friend and the military attache of Japan in Berlin also accompanied Bose. The Indian soldiers were sworn in to their flag under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Krappe. They expressed loyalty to Hitler and accepted Bose as their leader under whom they were to fight for India's freedom. The expansion of the Legion had posed financial difficulties and this necessitated the direct payment of the soldiers of the Legion by German authorities and Bose had to agree perforce to their expression of loyalty to Hitler.

Bose, however, had made it clear to the German Government that the Legion would not be mixed with any German Army formation and "its exclusive identity was to be maintained with the emblem of the Springing Tiger, which once adorned the flag of Tipu Sultan. The Legion was to maintain its separate identity and independence and the German Army was only to provide the necessary training staff and other facilities. The Legion was not to be sent to any other front except India. The Legionaries could however, fight in self-defence in any other place in the event of being taken by surprise. "To begin with the Legion was to have gone to war only in or near India: the only restriction left when Bose departed for the East was that it must be used against British Indian troops."

It is to the credit of Bose that although he had no previous military training he proved to be a born commander. Despite the lack of regular military training "he commanded his troops as efficiently as any professional Army Commander.

Bose continued to address the Legionaries to keep their moral high and also appealed to the enthusiastic crowds in the POW camps. His speeches made a deep effect on the minds of the assembled illiterates. He said that opportunities come but once in the life of a nation to improve its lot and if that is lost, it might come after decades. He said that, that opportunity had come and they must seize it to make their country free. "We have to take this chance and make the best of it. It is our sacred duty, for fulfilling which we should not expect any return, but if we do not do our duty when we know that it would help our people, we shall be great defaulters and sinners." The tremendous impact that his speeches produced has been very ably described by Girija Mukherjee, who was one of the important colleagues of Bose in Germany.

"When I watched Subhas speaking to the Indian soldiers and the effect he produced on them, I felt more and more convinced that he was a leader of the masses par excellence. I shall always remember a rally of Indian soldiers, mostly from peasant families, in Dresden where Subhas spoke for nearly an hour and a half. It was glorious autumn afternoon and all the men had gathered on the lawn. He spoke in Hindustani. When he finished, the audience of about 400 men had almost acquired a new life."

Bose was very particular about the military training of the Legionaries. He thought very highly of German military training and was keen that the Indians be imparted the same training. The German Army was reluctant in the beginning to do so. But he "eventually succeeded in getting artillery training for the Legion which was denied to Indian soldiers in the Indian Army."

The genius and foresight of Bose could be seen in the composition of the Legion. He wanted the Indians to be one unit in their struggle for freedom of the motherland overcoming their artificial differences of caste and religion. He said that the British Government in India was deliberately stirring up the fight among rival parties in India following the dictum of "*Divide et impera*". With this object in view the formation of army units in the Indian Army was not based on caste, religion or region. Bose dispensed with this practice and army units were organised by taking Indians of all religious faiths, castes and regions together to promote a fraternal spirit, while making provision for the observance of their separate religious rites and practices.

Sacrifice for the motherland became the ideal of the Legion with Bose making himself the example. It was inspired by national spirit and freedom of India became its main object. They forgot all their differences and were prepared to make the maximum sacrifice for the cause of India's liberation. "In India we have many gods and religions, but everything is only Jai Hind here," that was how a Legionary described the spirit of the Legion. "The Legion was inspired by a good spirit of comradeship, the feeling of belonging together and the mutual will to help, each other. A living national will was the distinguishing character of this Legion. The troops made every effort to maintain discipline in all respects, and the cooperation and relations with the German troops caused no serious difficulties. Even in difficult situations, the Legion suffered privation and proved their courage and readiness for battle." This fact has been corroborated by Alexander Werth: "The morale and discipline of the troops as well as the personal relationship between officers and soldiers were excellent. Netaji frequently visited the training camps in order to convince himself of the progress his men were making."

Adalbert Seifriz had paid glowing tributes to Bose's contributions to making and success of the Indian Legion:

"It must be emphasised that Bose's principle that preferment and advancement within the Legion should only depend on ability and proof of aptitude, independent of birth of former grade, was recognised and esteemed by the Legionaries. It can be said that the experiment to form Hindus, Sikhs, Moslems, Punjabis, Maharattas and Bengalees and members of other religious communities into a close military unit and to form an efficient fighting force, was crowned with success... The intellectual basis for the growth and success of the Legion was created by Subhas Bose. Repeatedly he explained to his compatriots and the German personnel his ideas about the Legion and their future task in free India. He was very anxious to see preserved in the Legion traditions of the cultural and political past of his country. With a feeling, fine and noble, he did his utmost to banish the danger of losing the cultural roots of his Legionaries... He was the great ideal of the Legion, and it was the ardent desire of each Legionary, upto the day of the German capitulation, to try to emulate him and to help him in the execution of his ideas. A meeting with Subhas Bose was a special event for the German training staff. We spent many evenings with him, discussing the future of India. He lives in the minds of the training staff members as an idealistic and fighting personality, never sparing himself in the service of his people and his country."

Bose had a highly ambitious plan in organising the Indian Legion in Germany. "This Army was the creation of Subhas Bose, a patriot to the core, a fearless and uncompromising fighter for Indian Freedom and therefore an eyesore to the British bureaucracy." Bose wanted to make the Army "the spearhead for the fight for freedom and the nucleus of the Free India Army of the future." He wanted to take the members of the Indian Legion to India when the time came.

Though Bose's plan to take the Legion of India did not see the light of day, he rendered great service to the Indian POWs who did not join the Legion. By virtue of the new status acquired by the Legion they were saved from inhuman treatment and torture which otherwise they would have suffered. The POWs were thus not only saved from strenuous physical labour in distant lands but their return to India, after the war was also facilitated."

According to A.C.N. Nambiar who was Netaji's deputy in Germany, one good result which came out of the formation of the Legion was that its existence helped the majority of the Indian POWs in the hands of the Axis Powers to return home safely and without being sent for hard labour in distant areas with difficult climatic conditions. As for Netaji, the project of the Free India Centre helped him gain experience in tough diplomacy as well as in the work of organization and administration for the next phase of his work. He also gained some useful knowledge of the art and strategies of a total war which he had witnessed in Europe during his sojourn there.

Netaji's Decision to Leave Germany

The setting up of the Free India Centre, the Azad Hind Radio and the Indian Legion were just the preliminary goals of Bose. But he still wanted a categorical official declaration by the Axis Powers on the question of Indian Independence after the war. This was not forthcoming and it made him suspect the German motives. "The Nazi Party viewed Bose with mixed emotions; as did he view the Nazi Party. This situation lasted until Hitler attacked the Soviet Union. Then Bose knew their ways would have to part."

Mussolini had earlier refused to see Bose in May 1941, when he went to Rome to persuade him to make a declaration of Indian Independence after the war. But after one year on May 5, 1942, Mussolini expressed his willingness to make an official declaration in favour of Indian independence although he had told Hitler earlier in Salzburg, that he would not support Bose's demand to make an official declaration on India's right to independence. After Mussolini, Premier Tojo of Japan also expressed his willingness to help Bose in his war of liberation against the British.

The historic meeting between Bose and Hitler took place on 29 May, 1942. Bose requested Hitler to explain as to what he exactly meant by the insulting remarks about India made in his book *Mein Kampf*. Hitler point-blank refused to discuss this point. Bose then requested Hitler to make an official declaration on India's right to independence after the war. "Hitler replied by saying that according to him India would not be able to rule herself for another 150 years." Hitler's refusal to make a declaration on India's right to independence on the pretext of great distance between the German war front and India came as a blow to Bose. At the end of the discussion Hitler asked Bose as to what practical steps he would take in the interest of the Indian Freedom Movement when the conditions were so unfavourable. Bose lost his patience and told Von Trott in English: "Tell His Excellency that I have been in politics all my life and that I don't need advice from any side." In spite of a diplomatic rendering of Bose's statement in German by Von Trott, the Hitler-Bose meeting was a total failure. "The meeting was a disappointment for Subhas," writes Girija Mookerjee, "and he did not like very much to speak about it. Subhas was not very much satisfied with Hitler, with whom, he said, a logical discussion even for a few minutes was impossible. We felt, however, that the reception of an Indian by the head of a foreign Government, as if he was the representative of a sovereign state, was some what flattering."

Bose had all along admired the socialist system of Russia which according to him was anti-imperialist and a friend of the oppressed and exploited people all over the world. Hence, when Germany wanted to pit the Indian Legion against the adversary in the East, Bose vehemently opposed the idea and he "succeeded in bringing about an agreement that the Indian soldiers were to be used only against the adversary in the West." Bose was firm that the Legion should fight against Soviet Union with whom India had no quarrel.

After the failure of a positive outcome from his meeting with Hitler, Bose decided that it was time for him to move out of Germany in order to play a more important and dynamic role in the fight for India's freedom. The idea of proceeding to the Far East had already taken root in his mind since the occupation of Singapore by the Japanese. He took the final decision, after all his efforts to convince Hitler about the importance of his political mission failed. Also, German losses in the Russian front had shattered all the hopes of Bose in Germany by the end of 1942.

Quit India Movement launched by the Congress in August 1942 had intensified and it convinced Bose that the time had come to be nearer India to synchronise the two movements—one fought from abroad by him and the other fought from within India against the British. He, therefore, decided to leave Europe.

Bose had already been in contact with Rash Behari Bose and his group through the Japanese Embassy in Berlin and Rome and had received an invitation from them to come to East Asia as soon as possible and assume the leadership of India's freedom movement. The Japanese Government too had extended an official invitation to come to East Asia.

Bose requested Oshima, the Japanese Ambassador in Berlin to enlist the help of the Japanese Government in implementing his plan. Initially, Tokyo was lukewarm towards such a project, but later on became more enthusiastic about the matter. In January 1943, Hitler approved the Japanese request to send Bose to Japan. Bose told Shun Higuchi, the then Military Attache to the Japanese Embassy in Berlin that he wanted a more vigorous and active development of India's freedom movement.

On 8 February, 1943 Bose left Berlin by train for Kiel, accompanied by Abid Hassan. From there he boarded the German Submarine U-190. Bose's Journey was kept a top secret and except Werth, Keppler, Nambiar and the military people concerned, nobody else knew about Bose's departure from Germany.

After, Bose's departure from Germany the Free India Centre regularly broadcast his tape-recorded speeches to create the illusion that he was very much in Germany. Bose landed on the West Coast of Sumatra after a long and arduous journey, where he was received by Colonel Yamamoto, who had become the head of the Hikari Kikan (Liaison Bureau). From Sumatra, Bose went to Singapore for talks with Rash Behari Bose, from where he had to fly to Tokyo for his talks with Japanese Government.

Indian Freedom Movement in South East Asia

Before the outbreak of the greater East Asia war, there were many Indian societies in South East Asia working for the cause of Indian independence. Among the more prominent ones was Rash Behari Bose. An eminent Indian revolutionary, he had escaped to Japan after throwing a bomb at Lord Hardinge.

Freeing India from the yoke of British control became his sole mission in life. With this purpose Rash Behari Bose founded the Indian independence League in 1924 with Tokyo as its headquarters and branches spread out in other neighbouring states.

Through the I.I.L. he explained the political conditions of India to the people of South East Asia and emphasised "the supreme importance of Indian Independence as a factor of Greater Asian freedom and unity. Another significant contribution of Rash Behari Bose was promotion of Indo-Japanese cooperation, goodwill and understanding. Rash Behari Bose had done ample spade-work in Japan for the Indian Freedom Movement before the arrival of Subhas Bose in South East Asia.

Rash Behari's efforts provided inspiration for similar movements in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok by Indian leaders.

The Indo-Japanese cooperation had become all the more urgent after Japan declared war on Britain and United States on 8 December, 1941. All the Armed Forces of Japan received telegrams from the Imperial General Headquarters to swing into action. The Indian Independence Volunteer Army marched side by side with the Japanese Army and won many victories and converts from the British ranks. Capt. Mohan Singh earned many accolades as the man "who subsequently was to go down in history as the founder of the Indian National Army." Mohan Singh avoided the use of the name "Indian Volunteer Army" and called it the "Indian National Army" instead, as he believed that a "Revolutionary Army" would never be able to accomplish its purpose without the support of the people.

The I.N.A. continued to gain more popularity and attracted a large number of Indian prisoners of war to join it. On 17 February, 1942 as many as 45,000 Indian prisoners of war assembled for a meeting and after speeches made by Pritam Singh and Mohan Singh respectively, their "excitement had reached the climax. They all vowed to cast in their lot with their leaders.

The I.I.L. organized a conference in Tokyo in March 1942 to discuss "plans for the liberation of their motherland." This meeting was attended by representatives of the Indians from all over East Asia and great importance was attached to this meeting. But this conference revealed that there was serious divergence of opinion between the Indians hailing from the Southern regions and those residing in Japan. The Indians in Japan were accused of being puppets of Japan. The Indians in Japan, on the other hand, thought that those who came from the Southern region had long since lost their revolutionary character as once they pledged their allegiance to Britain. The Indian freedom movement in South East Asia was considerably affected by these divergences and the situation was further worsened after the death of Pritam Singh in an aeroplane accident and the departure, of Major Fujiwara, "who was looked upon as the 'fosterfather' of the Indian National Army." He was succeeded by Col. Hideo Iwakuro in March 1942.

In accordance with the resolution adopted in Tokyo a meeting of the Indians of South East Asia was held at Bangkok on 15 May, 1942. Rash Behari Bose was elected as President and a sixty-point proposal was adopted for presentation to the Japanese Government.

The Bangkok Conference revealed the breach not only among the Indians residing in Japan and those hailing from other parts of East Asia but also the breach developing in the Indo-Japanese unity. Rash Behari Bose was suspected of being a puppet of the Japanese, who were trying to exploit the Indian people for their own interest. British propaganda was also partly responsible for promoting disunity among the Indians and their suspicion of the Japanese motives.

This resulted in a revolt led by Capt. Mohan Singh at the end of November 1942 as he genuinely suspected the Japanese motives.

When the League members protested saying that they could not be mere puppets of Japan, the Japanese Army officers replied:

"Puppets? What is the harm in being puppets? You should be proud to be the puppets of the Japanese."

Another factor that contributed to the breach between the League and the Japanese authorities was General Mohan Singh's desire to effect a rapid expansion of the I.N.A. As many as 40,000 men had signed a pledge to serve the Indian National Army by the end of August 1942. A Combat Division of over sixteen thousand officers and men was ready by the middle of September and Mohan Singh had the object of raising an army of 250,000 from the POW's and the civilians. Rather than rejoice at the rapid expansion of the I.N.A. the Japanese felt it interfered with Japanese war preparations.

Matters came to a head when the Japanese demand to send

900 men of the I.N.A. to Burma was turned down by General Mohan Singh who made it clear that there could be no movement of Indian troops until there was a clarification of Japan's intentions towards India.

On 21 December, 1942 General Mohan Singh resigned and ordered for the disbanding of the I.N.A. There was an open conflict between Rash Behari and Mohan Singh, as the former wanted to have the control of both the League and the I.N.A. in his own hands.

Rash Behari was anxious to avoid a confrontation and was keen to improve matters through negotiation. A seasoned politician he did not want to spoil the rousing spirit of the Indian freedom movement in East Asia by embittering the relations between the I.I.L. and the Japanese Government as it was impossible to think of the war of liberation without the support of Japan.

Things straightened out when Major Fujiwara the former Director of the "F" Kikan was placed on the staff of the Southern Army Command. There was a noticeable change in the Japanese policy towards the Indian Freedom Movement in East Asia.

I.I.L. and Subhas

Before Bose was to arrive in Japan, there was some doubt if Rash Behari would agree to turn the leadership over to Subhas Bose. But when Col. Iwakuro broke this news to Rash Behari he replied saying:

"That is a good idea. He is a born leader. I will be glad to turn the leadership over to Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose. Our ultimate goal is to win our independence. Since I have done my bit, I would like Mr. Chandra Bose to take over. He is young and bouncy."

On 4 July, 1943 in a mammoth meeting at Singapore, Bose took over the Presidentship of the Indian Independence League.

Bose in his turn appointed Rash Behari as the Supreme Adviser to the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. Addressing the League Conference, the new President said:

"Friends, the time to start an armed struggle for freedom has come. Military service and loyalty to the mother country are the most essential things necessary to achieve our goal of freedom during the war. I appeal to you, my countrymen in the Far East, to assemble under the common flag... The British may offer promises which I must tell you are made to ensure you. Any compromise with the British will be sheer loss for us, and will prove detrimental to our interests. We must be ready for sacrifice and action... We have now a good opportunity to free ourselves and lay the foundations of a new world order based on truth, justice and freedom. I ask those who have any doubts or suspicions in their minds to rely upon me. I shall always be loyal to India alone. I will never deceive my motherland. I will live and die for India. There is no one who can divert me from the right path.

"The time has come when the Indians at home and those abroad should gather together with arms under one leader and await the orders for the destruction of the British imperialists. I have decided to form a Free India Government in order to bring the different elements together and to collect our strength. The aim of this Provisional Government of India will be to make the Indian revolution a success. It will be the duty of this Government to arm the Indians at home and abroad and to realize our aspirations of freedom with the aid of arms. The task of our Provisional Government will end with the extirpation of British influence from India. The people of India will then be able to set up a National Government. We shall be ready to fight side by side with the Axis soldiers against our enemies when our preparations for armed warfare are completed. We shall pay the price of our freedom with our blood, but by so doing we shall lay the foundation stone of national unity. We shall be able to maintain our freedom if we attain it through our own sacrifices and blood."

Next day on the 5th of July, Bose reviewed the Indian Army and for the first time appeared in a military uniform. Talking to the men, he emphasised the need of a National Army for fighting the war of liberation and to preserve that independence against foreign aggression one the counting became independent.

"Every Indian must feel proud that this Army—his own Army—has been organized entirely under Indian leadership and that when the historic moment arrives, under Indian leadership it will go to battle."

It was in this meeting that Bose gave the I.N.A. its battle-cry: "Comrades! My Soldiers! Let your battle-cry be: "To Delhi!

to Delhi!" How many of us will individually survive this war of freedom, I don't know. But I do know this: that we shall ultimately win and our task will not end until our surviving heroes hold the victory parade on another graveyard of the British empire—the Lal Kila or Red Fortress of ancient Delhi."

His words surcharged the atmosphere, and fired the spirit of the I.N.A. soldiers.

"Comrades! You have voluntarily accepted a mission that is the noblest that the human mind can conceive of. For the fulfilment of such a mission no sacrifice is too great, not even the sacrifice of one's life. You are today the custodians of India's national honour and the embodiment of India's hopes and aspirations. So, conduct yourself that your countrymen may bless you and posterity may be proud of you.

"I have said that today is the proudest day of my life. For an enslaved people, there can be no greater pride, no higher honour, than to be the first soldier in the army of liberation. But this honour carries with it a corresponding responsibility and I am deeply conscious of it. I assure you that I shall be with you in darkness and in sunshine, in sorrow and in joy, in suffering and in victory. For the present, I can offer you nothing except hunger, thirst, privation, forced marches and death. But if you follow me in life and in death, as I am confident you will I shall lead you to victory and freedom. It does not matter who among us will live to see India free. It is enough that India shall be free and that we shall give our all to make her free. May God now bless our Army and grant us victory in the coming fight! Inquilab Zindabad! Azad Hind Zindabad!"

He also gave the call for the formation of a unit of brave Indian women to constitute a "death-defying regiment, who will wield the sword which the brave Rani of Jhansi wielded in India's First War of Independence in 1857." The formation of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, as a contingent of the I.N.A. was announced by Bose, at a mass rally of Indian women in Singapore on 12th of July.

The first thing that he did after becoming the President of the Indian Independence League, Bose reorganised the League by dividing it into twelve departments according to its various activities. The Departments were as follows: The General

Secretariat, Propaganda Department, Finance Department, Accounts and Audit Department, Recruitment and Training Department, Supplies Department, Women's Department, Housing and Transport Department, Health and Social Welfare Department, Education and Culture Department, Territorial Branches Department and the Overseas Department.

The League functioned like a Government. The various Departments cooperated and co-ordinated with each other to accelerate the march of the Freedom Movement and to provide men, material and money to the I.N.A. for the prosecution of the war. The Indian Independence League was revolutionized in its organization and its fighting spirit under the dynamic leadership of Bose.

On the 25th of July Bose issued a Special Order of the Day taking over the Supreme Command of the I.N.A. After he took the Command he reorganized and revitalized the I.N.A. with the creation of the Chief-of-Staff, Divisional Commands and the Army Department of the League. Under the revolutionary leadership of Bose the "I.N.A. took the form and effectiveness of any modern regular army." When Bose took over Command, the I.N.A. was 13,000 strong. He organised the Army in such a way that, besides fighting guerilla warfare, it could fight on the front as a regular fighting force. For this the present strength was found to be inadequate. He wanted to increase the strength to 50,000. But as Japanese Army had no resources to equip and train more than 30,000, Bose decided to organize three divisions of 10,000 troops each, plus a 20,000 strong Volunteer Army. The men and officers of the I.N.A. were recruited from among the P.O.W.'s and young Indians in East Asia.

Bose's request for Japanese help to expand the I.N.A. was not received favourably. The Hikari Kikan was opposed to the expansion of the I.N.A. Premier Tojo promised help though hesitatingly. This soured Indo-Japanese relations a bit.

Ultimately the I.N.A. was expanded and was organised into three divisions according to the plan of Bose, but the "basic mission remained guerrilla warfare and none of its divisions was capable of operating as a strategic division." However, after Bose assumed the leadership of the I.N.A. there was great enthusiasm among its men and officers and they vowed to sacrifice everything for the cause of Indian Independence.

Bose wanted to liberate Indian with the help and support of Indians: "If, I want the help of Japanese I can have it, but I want to win the freedom of India with the help of Indians alone." One of his officers of the I.N.A. said: "Netaji was like a god to us. He was a superman. He was a man of extreme independence. He would never allow himself to be bought by any foreign power. He would rather have seen himself being shot than being dictated to by the Japs."

Bose wanted to meet the Indians personally and he made a tour of all the Territorial Branches of the I.I.L. in East Asia to assess the situation. In the meantime training centres had been established in Malaya, Burma and Siam and these centres were already overflowing. Thousands of volunteers who could not be accommodated in these camps, were given part-time training and were in readiness to receive regular training when their turn came. Bose insisted on the independence of the I.N.A. He always expressed his fervent desire that the I.N.A. should spearhead the Japanese thrust into India.

On August 26, 1943, Bose expressed his desire before Maj. Gen. Todai Kunomura, Chief of Staff of the 15th Army and Maj. Iwaichi Fujiwara, the Intelligence Officer of the 15th Army. Gen. Kunomura told Bose that the 15th Army had received orders to prepare for an invasion of Imphal and it was the desire of Gen. Mutaguchi, Commander of the 15th Army to carry on this operation in full cooperation with the I.N.A. This had always been the long cherished desire of Bose, ever since he left Berlin.

The Indians in East Asia were unsure in the beginning about the wisdom of Bose's relations with the Japanese. The way in which the Japanese behaved with the people of Malaya and Burma and the unbecoming treatment towards Gen. Mohan Singh had made them suspect in the eyes of the Indians. But Bose was an entirely different person. He had no personal ambitions although he expressed a desire to "remain in history."

The only identity he said he had the cause of Indian independence.

Bose warned his soldiers that they should come prepared first to fight the British and then to fight the Japanese if it was necessary. To maintain the independence of the I.N.A., he never asked for any facility from Japan, that could be provided by the Indians in East Asia. The only help he asked from Japan, was the supply of war materials. It was due to Bose's insistence that the I.N.A. was the only army in East Asia which was not under the Military Law of the Japanese. Bose told the Japanese very categorically that the I.N.A. would fight only for the independence of India and would not allow itself to be exploited by the Japanese for their own interest.

Proof of the independence of the I.N.A. came soon enough when it refused to fight for the Japanese on two occasions—in August, 1944, against the Japanese in the area of Chumpong and against the Burmese army in March, 1945 after the Burmese National Army had rebelled against the Japanese. This independence was steadfastly maintained by Bose by not declaring war against Russia.

The Provisional Government of Azad Hind

By 21 October, 1943, the freedom movement of the Indians in East Asia had reached its peak. Enthusiasm was in great supply and Sprits were high. There was a well-organized and disciplined army in the I.N.A. and the League provided a system and a machinery. The dynamic leadership of Bose had under him three million Indians in East Asia, who were united and were ready to undergo any trials in order to liberate their motherland. The logical step now was the establishment of a Government without which it was not possible to get international recognition for the activities of the I.N.A. Without a Government Bose could not have declared the War of Independence, nor could he have led the army to battle as an equal partner of the Japanese Government. The Provisional Government of Free India had become a must for Bose and the idea of forming such a Government on the lines of the numerous emigre European Government then functioning from London had already taken deep roots in Bose's mind.

On 21 October, 1943 about 1,000 Indian representatives from different parts of East Asia assembled in Singapore to consider the proposal of Bose and "the Provisional Government of Free India was planned and established according to the free will of the Indian people to emancipate themselves from British Rule." In establishing the Provisional Government, besides meeting the exigencies of the Indian situation, Bose followed the course of History. The Irish people had set up a Provisional Government in 1916 to fight against the British. During the First World War the Czechs had followed the same course and after the War the Turks had formed their Provisional Government, under the leadership of Mustapha Kemal in Anatolia. On Netaji's proposal, the gathering unanimously approved the establishment of the Azad Hind government and elected Netaji as its Chief Executive.

Bose's concept of the Provisional Government of Free India was different from the normal peace time Governments. It was to be a fighting organisation with its main object being to launch and to conduct the war against the British and their allies in India.

The Japanese Government's official recognition to the Provisional Government of Azad Hind was given two days later on 23 October.

On the same day the Cabinet of the Provisional Government decided to declare war on Britain and the U.S.A. The Declaration was broadcast over the League Headquarters' Radio, by Bose on October 24, 1943. The Provisional Government did not declare war against Soviet Union, although she was the ally of Britain. Bose had always regarded Russia as an anti-imperialist power which was only forced by circumstances to join hands with Britain and America due to the defective foreign policy of Germany. Russian sympathy for India was evident from the speech of Molotov, the Russian Foreign Minister, at the Washington Security Conference that Russia would like to hear the voice of Free India at future conferences.

Netaji then read out a statement and also named the members of his Cabinet. The statement read:

"As a student of history and in particular, of revolutions in different parts of the world, during 22 years of my public life, I always felt that what India was lacking in her fight for freedom were two things—a National Army and a National Government to lead that army to battle. In the course of the present war, thanks to the brilliant victories achieved by the armed forces of Nippon it became possible for Indians in East Asia to organise the Indian Independence League and the Indian National Army.

"The creation of a NationalArmy gave reality and seriousness to the whole independence movement in EastAsia. If this army had not been organised, the Independence League in East Asia would have been a mere propaganda organ. With the creation of the National Army it became possible as well as necessary, to set up a Provisional Government ofAzad Hind (Free India). The Government is born out of the Independence League for the purpose of launching and directing the final struggle for India's freedom.

"In setting up this Provisional Government we are, on the one hand, meeting the exigencies of the Indian situation and on the other, following in the footsteps of history. In recent times, the Irish people set up their Provisional Government in 1916. The Czechs did the same during the last World War. And after the last World War, the Turks, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal, set up their Provisional Government in Anatolia.

"In our case, the Provisional Government of Azad Hind will not be like a normal peace-time government. Its functions and its composition will be of a unique kind. It will be a fighting organisation, the main object of which will be to launch and to conduct the last war against the British and their allies in India. Consequently, only such departments will be run by the Government as will be necessary for the launching and the prosecution of the struggle for liberty.

"The Cabinet will consist of a certain number who will represent the civil departments of the Government—while there will be others representing the armed forces of Government. Since the purpose of the Government is to fight for independence, the armed forces have been given a large representation on the Cabinet.

"Besides the ordinary Ministers of the Cabinet, provision has been made for a number of advisers to the Cabinet. In this manner, the Provisional Government will maintain close connection with the entire Indian community in East Asia and mobilise all their resources for the coming struggle. When the Provisional Government is transferred to Indian soil, it will assume the functions of a normal Government operating in its own territory. Many new departments will then be started.

"With the formation of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, the Indian Independence movement has obtained all the pre-conditions of success. It remains now to start the final struggle for freedom. This will begin when the Indian National Army crosses the frontier of India and commences its historic march to Delhi. The march will end only when the Anglo-Americans are expelled from India and the Indian National Flag is hoisted over the Viceroy's House in New Delhi."

After the names of the Cabinet members had been announced, Netaji read out, on behalf of the Azad Hind Government, its Proclamation of Independence which recounted briefly the various stages of India's struggle against domination by foreign powers. It declared that the Government claimed the allegiance of every Indian, all of whom were to be treated as equals, with equal rights in all respects. The proclamation ended with a stirring appeal:

"In the name of God, in the name of by gone generations who have welded the Indian people into one nation and in the name of the dead heroes who have bequeathed to us a tradition of heroism and self-sacrifice, we call upon the Indian people to rally round our banner and to strike for India's freedom. We call upon them to launch the final struggle against the British and all their allies in India and to prosecute the struggle with valour and perseverance and with full faith in final victory until the enemy is expelled from Indian soil and the Indian people are once again a free nation."

This was followed by the ceremony of taking the Oath of Allegiance. Understandably, the atmosphere had become emotionally charged. Amidst cheers, Netaji rose to read out the Oath and began: "In the name of God I take this sacred Oath that to liberate India and 38 crores of my countrymen, I, Subhas Chandra Bose, will continue the sacred war of freedom till the last breath of my life...."

This voice brake. There was a hush as the audience saw him wipe his eyes with the handkerchief and struggle to overcome his emotion for minutes before he could resume in a steady voice: "I shall always remain a servant of India and look after the welfare of 38 crores of Indian brothers and sisters. This shall be for me my highest duty. Even after winning freedom I will always be prepared to shed the last drop of my blood for the preservation of India's freedom."

One by one, the other members of the Provisional Government took the oath which for them read: "In the name of God, I take this holy oath that to liberate India and 38 crores of my countrymen I will be absolutely faithful to our leader Subhas Chandra Bose, and shall always be prepared to sacrifice my life and all I have for the cause."

The first meeting of the Cabinet was held the same night. Official recognition for the Provisional Government came from nine countries during the next few days. Germany's Foreign Minister Herr Von Ribbentrop was the first to send official felicitations in recognition of the Provisional Government. This message was followed by those from Croatia, China (Nanking), Manchukuo, Philippines, Burma, Italy, Japan and Siam. Eamon de Valera, President of the Irish Free State, sent his cordial felicitation to Netaji on the occasion.

The day after the declaration of war, Netaji inspected a march past of about thirty thousand men of the Azad Hind Fauj and delivered his first public speech after the establishment of the Provisional Government.

On the second day of this Conference it was after the adoption of the Greater East Asia Joint Declaration that Premier Ba Maw of Burma while addressing the Conference stated emphatically that "no emancipation of Asia is possible without liberation of India." Then a motion moved by him to "extend full sympathy and support to the Indian struggle for freedom," was carried unanimously.

This Conference was significant as it marked the emergence of Bose as the most dynamic "Indian leader carrying the fate of his motherland on his shoulders." Bose secured an independent and respectable status for the Provisional Government of Free India, which became associated with other countries in Greater East Asia.

Addressing this Conference Bose elaborated on his idea of the establishment of a cooperative international community, a new Asia and a free, prosperous Greater East Asia. He also expressed his determination that India should be made free:

"It does not matter who among us will live to see India free. It is enough that India should be free that the Anglo-American

Imperialism is wiped out of India and that the threat hanging over East Asia is removed once for all. I hope that the Greater East Asia Declaration adopted unanimously today will become a charter for the peoples of East Asia and also for the peoples of the world."

At this conference, Premier Tojo declared the intention of the Japanese Government to transfer the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the Indian territory held by Japan, to the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. These Islands were renamed by the Provisional Government of Azad Hind as "Shaheed" (Martyr) and "Swaraj" (Freedom) respectively. Bose personally visited the Islands on 29 December and took over the area as the sovereign territory of the Provisional Government of Free India. Lt. Col. A. D. Loganadhan was appointed as the Chief Commissioner.

Another highlight of the conference was when Premier Tojo said that after India is made free by the I.N.A. from the bondage of slavery, Bose would be the head of state in Free India. After hearing this Bose replied:

"General Tojo has no right to appoint me the Chief of the State. When India regains her freedom, it is for the masses of India to declare what form of Government they want and who should be at the head of the State. As far as I am concerned, I will say that Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru and Maulana Azad are the fittest, the ablest and the truest persons to form the Government. I am but a servant of theirs. I am just doing from the Far East what they are doing in India."

The Imphal Operations

The Japanese launched their long delayed offensive against Arakan and Imphal early in 1944. Bose emphasised that the I.N.A. should be fully involved in the Imphal Operation. But in this he was opposed by General Kawabe, the Chief of the Regional Army Command in Burma. According to him, the I.N.A. was still not ready to play an independent role and hence he suggested that companies of I.N.A. should be attached to Japanese Divisions taking part in the offensive.

Bose had made it very clear to the Japanese that any freedom of India secured through Japanese sacrifices was to him worse than slavery. He categorically stated that he would not cooperate with the Japanese to march into India "unless the Indian National Army formed the spearhead of the advance into India. To uphold the honour of India he said it was imperative that the first drop of blood to be shed on Indian soil should be that of a soldier of the Indian National Army."

Since the war was likely to be prolonged, Bose wanted to increase the quality and quantity of the I.N.A. Bose urged Gen. Kawabe that to prevent the Indian people from entering into a compromise with Britain, the Provisional Government should be established in India, as soon as the I.N.A. moved into India.

Bose had shifted the Provisional Government to Rangoon, the Capital of Burma on January 7, 1944. This was a strategic and politically significant step as India's Army of Liberation had to begin its attack in the wild regions of the Arakan Mountains, near the Indo-Burma border.

On January 24, 1944, General Katakura, Chief of the Japanese General Staff in Burma met Bose and Shah Nawaz and informed them that it was a part of the Japanese plan to launch simultaneously a heavy air attack on Calcutta, and the advance of land-forces. Bose was vehemently against this. According to him, this would shake the confidence of the Indian people in him.

On 3 February, 1944, the night before the Indian forces were to depart to the front, Bose delivered his farewell speech calling the soldiers to prove themselves as worthy of as India's freedom depended on them, Bose said:

"Blood is calling to blood! Arise! We have no time to lose. Take up our arms.... The road to Delhi is the road to Freedom. On to Delhi."

Despite the fact that the I.N.A. was battling against heavy odds initially the enthusiasm was so great and the cause so sacred that the "valiant Indian National Army bravely pressed forward, through difficult terrain, not caring for even bare necessities, but, urged on to deeds of great valour, by the spirit of pure patriotism and self-sacrifice. For the first time in nearly a hundred years, an Indian Army offered and commanded by an Indian, fought under its own banner, the National Flag of Free India." The I.N.A. had to face dangers, discomforts and privations, at almost every step but they willingly obeyed their officers as they were also sharing the same fate.

Finally on 21 March, 1944, the I.N.A. crossed the western Indo-Burma border and set foot on Indian soil, overcoming of geographical and climatic handicaps.

According to eye-witnesses "The entry of the I.N.A. on Indian territory was a most touching scene. Soldiers laid themselves flat on the ground and passionately kissed the sacred soil of their motherland which they had set out to liberate. A regular flag-hoisting ceremony was held amidst great rejoicing and singing the Azad Hind Fauj National Anthem."

The Indian National Army crossed the Indo-Burma border into India from the South on 7 May, 1944.

On the 21st of March, Bose issued his historic proclamation, specially addressed to the Indians, informing the people of Indian that the Army of India's liberation was now fighting on Indian soil, and it urged the Indians to cooperate and assist the I.N.A. in its mission to drive the British out of India. He even urged the civilians in India to help the cause of freedom by insurrection the sabotage and the British Indian Army could serve the cause by mutiny and desertion.

Responding to this appeal Premier Tojo of Japan made a declaration, while addressing the Diet on the 22nd of March: "It is natural that all areas over which the Indian National Army marches within India, must be placed completely under the administration of the Provisional Government."

Imphal was the main target of the Indo-Japanese operation. Unfortunately, the British Army had immense superiority over the air.

However, despite valiantly battling against the British forces, the Imphal Operations began to crumble. Defeat began to set in and surrender seemed imminent. On 5 July, 1944, the Regional Army issued orders cancelling the Imphal Operations entirely. The Japanese 15th Army and the I.N.A. began to pull out of the area, after four months of their advance to the front.

On 6 July, 1944, he addressed a message to Gandhi and spoke out his heart.

"The only reward that we desire for our efforts, for our suffering and for our sacrifice is the freedom of our motherland. There are many among us who would like to retire from the political field, once India is free."

He ended his message with the following words:

"Father of our Nation! In this holy war of India's liberation, we ask for your blessings and good wishes.

Despite Japan's surrender the revolutionary spirit of Bose was not doused. After hearing the stunning news of the Japanese capitulation he first broke into a smile and said:

"So, that is that. Now, what next?"

"Japan's surrender was not India's surrender. Japan's surrender was not the surrender of the Liberation Forces fighting for India's freedom. He would not admit defeat."

Bose felt a true revolutionary was invincible in spirit:

"A true revolutionary is one who never acknowledges defeat, who never feels depressed or disheartened. A true revolutionary believes in the justice of his cause and is confident that his cause is bound to prevail in the long run." Bose was aware that a war of liberation called for tremendous sacrifice, courage and patience. Even after a decisive Anglo-American victory in Europe and the surrender of Japan, the fight against the British in East Asia had to be continued.

Bose asked his soldiers not to be disheartened. He was conscious that 38 crores of people living in India were looking to him and the I.N.A. as to what would be their next step:

"Be, therefore, true to India, let not your faith in India's destiny be shaken. There are many roads to Delhi. And Delhi is still our goal. The sacrifices of your immortal comrades and yourselves will certainly bring us victory. There is no power on earth which can keep India in bondage. India will certainly be free and, that too, soon, Jai Hind."

This was the Special Order of the Day of August 17, 1945, seven days after the surrender of Japan. The same day in a message he asked the Indians in East Asia not to be disheartened in their temporary defeat. He asked them not to lose faith in the destiny of India.

Bose could no longer remain in East Asia. Bose went to Saigon from Singapore, having made up his mind to go to Russia to seek Russian help. He believed that the Soviets could pose a greater challenge to British supremacy.

"The Provisional Government of Azad Hind will continue to follow international developments with the closest interest and endeavour to take the fullest advantage of them. The fundamental principles of our foreign policy has been and will be: 'Britain's enemy is India's friend'." said Bose. However fate decided otherwise. The plane in which Bose travelled, crashed in Taipei on 18 August, 1945, on its way to Dairen, resulting in his death.

Even though the shadow of death was hanging over him, the idea of the liberation of his motherland was foremost in his mind. His death occurred at 9.00 p.m. on August 19, 1945 and the following were his last words:

"Habib, my end is coming very soon. I have fought all my life for my country's freedom. I am dying of my country's freedom. Go and tell my countrymen to continue the fight for India's freedom. India will be free, and before long."

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A Gifted Orator: Broadcasts to India from Berlin, Tokyo and Azad Hind Radio

It is hard to believe that Netaji, as a child, was shy and introverted when one compares him to Netaji, the adult, who spoke fearlessly and powerfully, whipping up nationalistic fervour with the power of his words. Subhas grew up in a large, crowded family which initially awed him and ultimately drove him into a self-protective shell. And like all introverts, he broke down the walls of that cocoon himself when his burning love for his country transcended his diffidence and gave him the courage and zeal to address mammoth crowds.

The speeches he broadcast over the Azad Hind Radio in Berlin, and Tokyo were sources of inspiration not only for the I.N.A. but also for the scores of enslaved Indians who heard him, and in whom burned the same revolutionary zeal as it did in Subhas.

A selection of these stirring speeches have been reproduced here. They also reveal, in addition to his command over the language, his intuitive grasp of the mood of the hour. The speeches are passionate and came straight from the heart, reflecting the magnificent obsession of Bose for his motherland which helped him brave the fiercest storm, and overcome the greatest odds.

Tripuri Congress

Comrade Chairman, sister and brother delegates! I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the great honour you have done me by re-electing me to the presidential chair of the Indian national Congress, and also for the warm and cordial welcome you have given me here at Tripuri. It is true that at my request you have had to dispense with some of the pomp that is usual on such occasions. But I feel that this has not taken away one iota of the warmth and cordiality of your reception, and I hope that nobody will regret the curtailment of it on this occasion.

Friends, before I proceed any further I shall voice your feelings by expressing joy at the success of Mahatma Gandhi's mission to Rajkot and the termination of his fast in consequence thereof. The whole country now feels happy and tremendously relieved.

You are aware that the Wafdist delegation from Egypt have arrived in our midst as the guests of the Indian National Congress. You will join me in according the most hearty welcome to all of them. We are extremely happy that they found it possible to accept our invitation and make the voyage to India. We are only sorry that political exigencies in Egypt did not permit the President of the Wafd, Mustapha Nahas Pasha, personally to lead this delegation. Having had the privilege of knowing the President and leading members of the Wafdist Party, my joy today is all the greater. Once again I offer them, on behalf of our countrymen, a most hearty and cordial welcome.

Friends, this year promises to be an abnormal or extraordinary one in many ways. The presidential election this time was not of a humdrum type. The election was followed by sensational developments, culminating in the resignation of twelve out of the fifteen members of the Working Committee, headed by Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad and Mr. Rajendra Prasad. Another distinguished and eminent member of the Working Committee, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, though he did not formally resign, issued a statement which led everybody to believe that he had also resigned. On the eve of the Tripuri Congress the events at Rajkot forced Mahatma Gandhi to undertake a vow of fast unto death. And then the President arrived at Tripuri a sick man. It will, therefore, be in the fitness of things if the presidential address this year can claim to be a departure from precedent in the matter of its length.

Since we met at Haripura in February 1938, several significant events have taken place in the international sphere. The most important of these is the Munich Pact of September 1938, which implied an abject surrender to Nazi Germany on the part of the Western Powers, France and Great Britain. As the result of this, France ceased to be a dominant power in Europe and the hegemony passed into the hands of Germany without a shot being fired. In more recent times, the gradual collapse of the Republican Government in Spain seems to have added to the strength and prestige of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. The so-called democratic powers, France and Great Britain, have joined Italy and Germany in conspiring to eliminate Soviet Russia from European politics for the time being. But how long will that be possible? And what have France and Great Britain gained by trying to humiliate Russia?

There is no doubt that as the result of the recent international developments in Europe as well as in Asia, British and French Imperialism have received a considerable set-back in the matter of strength and prestige.

Coming to home politics, in view of my ill-health I shall content myself with referring to only a few important problems. In the first place, I must give clear and unequivocal expression to what I have been feeling for some time past, namely that the time has come for us to raise the issue of Swaraj and submit our national demand to the British Government in the form of an ultimatum. The time is long past when we could have adopted a passive attitude and waited for the Federal Scheme to be imposed on us. The problem is no longer as to when the Federal Scheme will be forced down our throats. The problem is as to what we should do if the Federal Scheme is conveniently shelved for a few years till peace is stabilized in Europe. There is no doubt that once there is stable peace in Europe, whether through a Four-Power Pact or through some other means, Great Britain will adopt a strong Empire policy. She is now showing some signs of trying to conciliate the Arabs as against the Jews in Palestine, because she is feeling insecure in the international sphere. In my opinion, therefore, we should submit our national demand to the British Government in the form of an ultimatum and give a certain time-limit; if no reply is received within this period or if an unsatisfactory reply is received, we should resort to such sanctions as we possess in order to enforce our national demand.

The sanction that we possess today is mass civil disobedience or Satyagraha. And the British Government today are not in a position to face a major conflict like an all-India Satyagraha for a long period. It grieves me to find that there are people in the Congress who are so pessimistic as to think that the time is not ripe for a major assault on British Imperialism. But looking at the situation in a thoroughly realistic manner, I do not see the slightest ground for pessimism. With the Congress in power in eight provinces, the strength and the prestige of our national organization have gone up. The mass movement has made considerable headway throughout British India. And last but not least, there is an unprecedented awakening in the Indian States. What more opportune moment could we find in our national history for a final advance in the direction of Swaraj, particularly when the international situation is favourable to us? Speaking as a cold-blooded realist, I may say that all the facts of the present-day situation are so much to our advantage that one should entertain the highest degree of optimism. If only we sink our differences, pool our resources and pull our full weight in the national struggle, we make the most of our present favourable position; or we shall miss this opportunity which is a rare opportunity in the lifetime of a nation.

I have already referred to the awakening in India and to the awakening in the Indian States. I am definitely of the view that we should revise our attitude towards the States as defined by the Haripura Congress resolution. That resolution, as you are aware, put a ban on certain forms of activity in the States being conducted in the name of the Congress. Under that resolution neither parliamentary work nor the struggle in the States should be carried on in the name of the Congress, but since Haripura much has happened. Today we find that the Paramount Power is in league with the State authorities in most places. In such circumstances should we of the Congress not draw closer to the people of the

States? I have no doubt in my mind as to what our duty is today. Besides lifting the above ban, the work of guiding the popular movement in the States for civil liberty and responsible government should be conducted by the Working Committee on a comprehensive and systematic basis. The work so far done has been of a piecemeal nature, and there has hardly been any system or plan behind it. But the time has come when the Working Committee should assume this responsibility and discharge it in a comprehensive and systematic way and, if necessary, appoint a special Sub-Committee for the purpose. The fullest use should be made of the guidance and co-operation of Mahatma Gandhi and of the co-operation of the All-India State Peoples' Conference.

I have referred earlier to the advisability of our making the final advance in the direction of Swaraj. That will need adequate preparation. In the first place, we shall have to take steps to remove ruthlessly whatever corruption or weakness has entered into our ranks, largely due to the lure of power. Next we shall have to work in close co-operation with all anti-imperialist organizations in the country, particularly the Kisan movement and the trade union movement. All of the radical elements in the country must work in close harmony and co-operation, and the efforts of all anti-imperialist organizations must converge in the direction of a final assault on British Imperialism.

Friends, the atmosphere within the Congress today is clouded and dissensions have appeared. Many of our friends are consequently feeling depressed and dispirited. But I am an incorrigible optimist. The cloud that you see today is a passing one. I have faith in the patriotism of my countrymen and I am sure that before long we shall be able to tide over the present difficulties and restore unity within our ranks. A somewhat similar situation had arisen at the time of the Gaya Congress in 1922 and thereafter, when Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru of hallowed memory started the Swaraj Party. May the spirit of my late Guru, of the revered Motilal and of the other great sons of India inspire us in the present crisis, and may Mahatma Gandhi, who is still with us to guide and assist the nation, help the Congress out of the present tangle. This is my earnest prayer. Vande Mataram![1]

The Cripps Mission

This is Subhas Chandra Bose, who is still alive, speaking to you over the 'Azad Hind' Radio. British news agencies have spread all over the world the report that I died in an aeroplane crash on my way to Tokyo to attend an important conference there. Ever since I left India last year, British propaganda agencies have from time to time given contradictory reports of my `whereabouts, while newspapers in England have not hesitated to use uncomplimentary language about me. The latest report about my death is perhaps an instance of wishful thinking. I can imagine that the British Government would, at this critical hour in India's history, like to see me dead since they are now trying their level best to win India over to their side for the purpose of their imperialistic war.

I have not before me the full particulars of the aeroplane disaster referred to above. I cannot, therefore, say if it was the result of sabotage on the part of our enemy. In any case, I beg to offer my respectful homage to the memory of those who lost their lives in that tragic event. Their names will be written in letters of gold in the history of our struggle for independence.

I have considered very carefully the offer of the British Government to India and the radio speech of Sir Stafford Cripps in that connection. I feel perfectly convinced that it is now quite dear that Sir Stafford has gone to India to try the age-long policy of British imperialism—'divide and rule'. Many people in India did not expect Sir Stafford Cripps to play a role which might very well have been reserved for a Conservative politician like Mr. Amery. Sir Stafford has himself assured us that the terms offered to India are, in his opinion, the soundest and the best, and that the members, of the British Cabinet were all unanimous over these proposals.

This affords one further proof that, in Britain, all party differences disappear when the question of India comes up. Sir Stafford has told us that India is a sub-continent inhabited by many races and peoples. I would like to remind him that India was unified under the empire of Asoka the Great, several centuries before the Christian etc.—more than 1,000 years before England was unified.

Britain has in other parts of her Empire, for instance in Ireland and Palestine, used the religious issue in order to divide the people. She has been utilizing in India for that same purpose not only this issue but other imperial weapons like the Indian Princes, Depressed Classes, etc. Now Sir Stafford is in India to use the same instruments for imperialistic ends. It is no less striking that Sir Stafford is applying the old imperialist policy of working for a compromise with one section of the people while simultaneously suppressing the other. That is why on the one side Sir Stafford is conferring with one set of politicians, while on the other the fearless and uncompromising fighters for independence are safely lodged behind prison bars. The Indian people are fully aware of this nefarious policy of British politicians. I have no doubt that the spirit of our freedom fighters will hurl down the prison walls and inspire the people of India to know that this is an insult to India's self-respect and honour.

As the London paper, the *Daily Telegraph*, has remarked, Sir Stafford's proposals contain nothing that is fundamentally new. The essence is Dominion Status within the Empire, which will be realized only when the war is over. But according to the terms of the offer, the speech of Sir Stafford Cripps, and the comments of English papers like the *Manchester Guardian*, it is quite clear that the real intention of the British government is to split India into a number of States, just as Ireland was split up at the end of the last war. I am doubtful whether India will even look at such an offer. Indians are by nature hospitable, and Sir Stafford will be committing a grievous mistake if he interpreted such hospitality to mean the acceptance of his offer.

Sir Stafford reached the height of imperialist hypocrisy when, at a press conference at Delhi, he remarked that Indians have not been able to produce an agreed constitution. But the Indian people know from their bitter experience that only the British Government is responsible for the corruption and bribery in India. The Indian people are, therefore, convinced that they can no longer hope to win their freedom by discussion or argument, propaganda and passive resistance, but must now resort to other methods that are more effective and powerful.

Sir Stafford also mentioned that while the war is going on, a new constitution cannot be framed for India, and hence the inauguration of Dominion Status will begin on the termination of the war. I may remind Sir Stafford Cripps that, as early as October 1939, I replied to the British Government by suggesting that a Provisional National Government, commanding the confidence of the majority of the people, should be set up at once. This Provisional National Government could be made responsible to the present Indian LegislativeAssembly. In other words, the Provisional National Government could be made responsible to the elected members of the IndianAssembly. This suggestion was first of all put forward by me on behalf of the Forward Bloc of the Congress, and it being practicable and reasonable, the official Congress Committee also adopted it as their own demand. The fact, however, is that the British Government is not ready to part with power at the present moment. By raising the issue of the minorities or of the Princes or of the so-called Depressed Classes, they can at any time find a plea that Indians are not united. Sir Stafford must be living in a fool's paradise if he thinks that, by making such hopeless offers, he can satisfy India's hunger for freedom. In the last World War, with the help of India, the war was won by England but India's reward was further suppression and massacre. India has not forgotten those episodes, and she will see that the present golden opportunity is not lost.

Since the beginning of this century, the British Government has been using another organization as a counterblast to the Congress in order to reject its demands. It has been using the Muslim League for this purpose, because that party is regarded as pro-British in its outlook. In fact, British propaganda has tried to create the impression that the Muslim League is almost as influential a body as the Congress, and that it represents the majority of India's Muslims. This, however, is far from the truth. In reality there are several influential and important Muslim organizations which are thoroughly nationalist. Moreover, of the 11 provinces in British India, out of which only four have a majority of Muslims, only one, the Punjab, has a Cabinet which may be regarded as a Muslim League Cabinet. But even the Punjab Premier is strongly opposed to the main programme of the Muslim League, namely the division of India. But even then it is said that the majority of the Muslims will not stand for Indian independence.

As far as the defence of India is concerned, it is stated in the British proposals that, so long as the war lasts, the full military control of India will be directly in the hands of Britain, not even in the hands of the Viceroy or the Commander-in-Chief in India. By this policy, Britain wants to achieve a two-fold purpose. She desires, on the one hand, to utilize to the fullest extent India's resources for the whole Empire, and, on the other, to force thereby the enemies of Britain to attack Britain's military base in India, so that the Indian people may be provoked into voluntarily entering the war as Britain's ally. I would like to affirm, with all the emphasis at my command, that all the pro-British Indians who are participating in Britain's war will alone be responsible if the war comes ultimately to India. I would like further to warn my countrymen that Britain's sole object now is to drag the Indian people into the war. It has been a successful game of the British people to get other nations involved in the war. Up to the present time they have been carrying out glorious retreats and successful evacuations. Recently they have adopted a novel policy of burning and destroying everything before taking to their heels. If the British Government apply these scorched-earth tactics to their own country, that is no concern of ours. But I have every reason to believe that they have decided to apply these scorched-earth tactics in Ceylon and India, should the war come there. Therefore, participation in Britain's war will not only hinder Britain's defeat and overthrow, but will also delay the attainment of independence for Indians.[2]

Thank you, Japan!

This is Subhas Chandra Bose speaking to you over the Azad Hind Radio in reply to the historic declaration of the Prime Minister of Japan.

His Excellency the Prime Minister of Japan, General Tojo, has after the fall of Singapore and of Rangoon, made two historic pronouncements on the Indian problem. These declarations are of such great significance that it is necessary for India to state in reply what her attitude is. On behalf of all freedom-loving Indians in India and abroad, I offer my sincere thanks to the Japanese Prime Minister for his outspoken sympathy for Indian independence. The slogan he has uttered, "India for the Indians" will go down in history as the prophetic utterance of a far-seeing statesman. Ever since the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905, the Indian people have looked upon the awakening in Japan with admiration. It was through Japan that Asia first asserted her self-respect and honour. A strong Japan, therefore, is in the best interests of Asia.

I welcome most heartily the statement of His Excellency the Prime Minister that Japan is determined to destroy completely the influence of Anglo-American imperialism in the East. Until this is done, Asia will be under a perpetual danger. Asia, and particularly India, will be for ever grateful to the Tripartite Powers if they can dispose of this menace once for all. The present war which the Tripartite Powers are waging against Britain and America is of vital interest to India, and the Indian people are, therefore, following with joy and satisfaction the continued defeats of the Anglo-American forces.

It will be wrong for me to ignore the fact that there is a certain section among the Indian people that is, for some reason or other, on the side of Britain. This is but natural in a country that has been so long under a foreign yoke. But I may say without the slightest exaggeration that the vast majority of the Indian people are burning with the desire to break their shackles of bondage. For them this war is a God-sent opportunity for realizing their long-cherished aspirations and achieving independence.

The people of India remember quite clearly how they were deceived and betrayed by British politicians during the last World War. They have no desire to repeat that experience. They know that British rule in India has been long record of broken pledges and unredeemed promises. They have, therefore, resolved to liquidate once for all the British regime in India, which was born of robbery and corruption and which has thrived on injustice and oppression.

I can assure His Excellency the Prime Minister that India will not miss this golden opportunity, which is indeed rare in the lifetime of a nation. The people of India are today fully conscious of the factors that are primarily responsible for her servitude and her isolation from the rest of the world and her internal disunity. This lesson, which they have learnt from bitter and painful experience, they will never forget. As in the old days, when India was a free, proud and progressive nation, so also in future will the Indian people live in the closest friendship with all the other nations of the world, and in particular with the Tripartite Powers, and thereby contribute to the common culture and civilization of humanity. It will be an honour and privilege for India to co-operate intimately with Japan in the noble task of creating a great Asia that will be free, happy and prosperous.

Inquilab Zindabad! Azad Hind Zindabad![3]

The 'Quit India' Movement

Comrades! Since I spoke to you last, about two weeks ago, the movement in India has been continuing with unabated vigour, and has been spreading like wild fire from the towns to the countryside. The British propaganda machinery throughout the month has tried to give the impression that the campaign is now subsiding and that things are quietening down. But this attempt has completely failed, because in the same breath the B.B.C. and its agents have given, or rather have been forced to give, news of more shooting on unarmed men and women all over the country. I can assure you that in the year of grace 1942, India can no longer be isolated from the rest of the world, however much Britain may try to draw a veil over that land. As a matter of fact, every bit of news regarding India's national struggle, every incident in Indian towns and villages, every case of shooting, whether in Ramnad or in Wardha, in Bikrampore or in Lucknow, is immediately flashed all over the world, is broadcast over the radio and published in the Press in all those countries that are their hostile to the Allied Powers or are neutral. Comrades, I know very well how in all the previous campaigns we were hard put to it to inform the outside world about the happenings in India and about the atrocities committed by British imperialists. Today the problem does not exist, and it is my pleasant task to keep the outside world informed about all events in India and to secure all the sympathy and help that India may need in her hour of trial. If today you could see with your own eyes and hear with your own ears all that is being propagated by your friends abroad about India's epic struggle, you would realize the measure of sympathy that India is receiving from the enemies of British Imperialism. And this sympathy for India is bound to grow in volume and intensity as British terror and brutality increases. The more we suffer and the more we sacrifice in the pursuit of our national freedom, the more will India's prestige go up in the eyes of the world.

I should like to tell you further that while we have gained the moral sympathy of public opinion throughout the world, it is also possible for us to obtain from abroad any help that we may need for our emancipation. Therefore, in the fight against all the modern forms of terror and brutality, if you feel overwhelmed at any time and if you desire your friends abroad to give you the hand of assistance, you have only to say so. But these friends, who are anxious to see India free, will not offer their help to you, so long as you do not need it, and for our national honour and self-interest, we should not ask for any assistance so long as we can do without it.

In this connection, I would appeal to you once again to trust fully your countrymen abroad who are working heart and soul with you for the speedy liberation of India. We are today the custodians of India's national honour, the unofficial Ambassadors of free India. As at home, so also abroad, we stand always for Independence, and we shall never permit vital encroachments on our national sovereignty by any foreign power.

Do not be carried away by ideological considerations; do not bother about the internal politics of other countries, which is no concern of ours. Believe me when I say that the enemies of British Imperialism are our friends and allies. It is to their interest to see the British Empire broken up and India once again free. And they know very well that so long as India remains under the British yoke, there can be no victory for them and there can be no peace. In the political field, I should be the last man to expect foreign Powers to sympathize with us if it were not in their own interest to do so.

Comrades, you must have observed how during the last few months the British Empire has been passing through its darkest hours. Gone are the days when London was the metropolis of the world. Gone are the days when kings and statesmen had to wend their way to London in order to have their problems solved. Gone are the days when the American President had to come to Europe to meet the British Prime Minister. As an English poet, Tennyson, has himself said, "The old order changes yielding place to new, and God fulfils himself in many ways." Consequently, the British Prime Minister has now to run to New York and Washington, and Americans in Britain are declared to be outside the jurisdiction of British laws. Thus, Britain and her Empire are fast becoming a colony of Roosevelt's 'New Empire'. But India has no desire to remain in any empire, and she must, therefore, now fight the old imperialism as well as the new. The most interesting phase of the metamorphosis that has overtaken the British Empire is the fact that the High Priest of Imperialism, the arch-enemy of Indian nationalism, the sworn opponent of all forms of Socialism, the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, has had to swallow all his former imperialist pride and present himself at the gates of the Kremlin in Moscow.

Is it not significant that in his desperation this representative of British imperialism should do everything else, but under no circumstances will he think of recognizing India's independence? India is the jewel of the British Empire, and in order to keep this jewel the British people will fight to the last. The Indian people, therefore, and particularly the leaders, should banish all hopes that Britain will accede to India's demands, and should carry on the struggle till the last Britisher is expelled from India. In the last days of our campaign there will be much suffering and sorrow, much persecution and slaughter, much suppression and massacre. But that is the price of liberty and it has to be paid. It is but natural that in its last hours the British lion will bite hard, but it is after all the bite of a dying lion, and we shall survive it.

In this critical hour our strategy should consist in continuing the fight for our independence regardless of the consequences. The British Empire will soon collapse and break up as a result of shattering defeats in all the theatres of war. And when the final dismemberment of the Empire takes place, power will automatically come into the hands of the Indian people. Our final victory will come as a result of our efforts alone. Consequently, it does not matter in the least if we in India suffer temporary setbacks, specially when we are confronted with machine-guns, bombs, tanks and aeroplanes. Our task is to continue the national struggle in spite of all obstacles and set-backs till the hour of liberation arrives.

There is no cause to be depressed because the leaders are imprisoned. On the contrary, their sufferings will serve as a perpetual inspiration to the entire nation. Moreover, those who are now away from the field of action have given you the plan that has to be executed by you now.

Comrades, I have already assured you that whatever I have been doing abroad is in accordance with the wishes of a very large section of my countrymen. I will not do anything which the whole of India will not wholeheartedly endorse. Ever since I left home I have remained in intimate contact with my countrymen at home through more channels than one, in spite of all the efforts of the Intelligence Bureau of the Government of India and the British Secret Service. During the last few months you have had proof of my close contact with my countrymen in India and many of you know by now how you can communicate with me whenever you so desire. I may now tell you that it is no longer possible for the British to prevent my going to India or getting out whenever I wish to do so.

At the present moment all the countries that are being suppressed or dominated by Britain are either in a state of revolt or are preparing for one. If we in India continue our struggle we shall not only effect our emancipation speedily, but will also expedite the liberation of all countries exploited and dominated by Britain. On the other hand, if the Indian people remain inactive, the enemies of Britain will take the initiative in expelling the British from India. The British Empire is in any case doomed, and the only question is as to what will happen to us when its final dissolution takes place. Shall we obtain our freedom as a right from other Powers or shall we win it by our own effort?

I would request Mr. Jinnah, Mr. Savarkar, and all those leaders who still think of a compromise with the British, to realize once for all that in the world of tomorrow there will be no British Empire. All those individuals, groups or parties who now participate in the fight for freedom will have an honoured place in India of tomorrow. The supporters of British Imperialism will naturally become nonentities in a free India. I will appeal earnestly to all parties and groups to consider this and to think in terms of nationalism and anti-imperialism, and to come forward and join the epic struggle that is going on now. I appeal to the progressive elements of the Muslim League, with some of whom I have had the privilege of co-operating in the work of the Calcutta Corporation in 1940. I appeal to the brave Majlis-i-Ahrar, the Nationalist Muslim party of India that started the Civil Disobedience campaign in 1939 against Britian's war effort before any other party did so. I appeal to the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, the old representative organization of the Ulemas or the Muslim divines of India, led by that distinguished patriot and leader Mufti Khifayat Ullah. I appeal to the Azad Muslim League, another important organization of the nationalist Muslims of India. I appeal to the Akali Dal, the leading nationalist Sikh party of India. And last but not the least I appeal to the Praja Party of Bengal, which commands the confidence of that province and is led by well-known patriots. I have no doubt that if all these organizations join in this struggle the day of India's liberation will be drawn nearer.

The campaign that is now going on in India may be described as non-violent guerrilla warfare. In this guerrilla war the tactics of dispersal have to be employed. In other words, we should spread out our activities all over the country so that the British police and military may not be able to concentrate their attack on one point. In accordance with the principles of guerrilla war, we should also be as mobile as possible and should move continuously from place to place. The authorities should never be able to predict where our activities will emerge next. Friends, as you are aware, I have been through each of the campaigns between 1921 and 1940, and I know the causes of their failure. I have now had the opportunity of taking expert advice with regard to the tactics of guerrilla warfare, and I am in a position to offer you some suggestions as to how this present campaign should be brought to a victorious end. The object of this non-violent guerrilla campaign should be a two-fold one. Firstly, to destroy war production in India, and, secondly, to paralyze the British administration in the country. Keeping these objects in view, every section of the community should participate in the struggle.

Firstly, you should stop paying all taxes that directly or indirectly bring revenue to the Government. Secondly, workers in all industries should either launch a 'stay-in' strike or try to hamper production by conducting a 'go slow' campaign inside the factories. They should also carry out sabotage with such methods as the removing of nuts and bolts in order to impede production. Thirdly, students should organize secret guerrilla bands for carrying on sabotage in different parts of the country. They should also invent new ways of annoying the British authorities, for example, burning stamps, etc., in post offices, destroying British monuments, and so on. Fourthly, women, and especially girl students, should do underground work of all kinds, either as secret messengers or by providing shelter for the men who fight. Fifthly, Government officials who are prepared to help the campaign should not resign their posts, but those in Government offices and in war industries should give all available information to fighters outside, and should try to tamper production by working inefficiently. Sixthly, servants who are working in the houses of Britishers should be organized for the purpose of giving trouble to their masters, for example by demanding higher salaries, cooking and serving bad food and drinks, etc. Seventhly, Indians should give up all business with British banks, firms, insurance companies, etc. Eighthly, listen to the broadcasts of Col. Britton in the European Service of the B.B.C. and apply the Colonel's tactics to the Indian situation.

For the general public I also suggest the following activities:

(a) Boycott of British goods, including burning of British stalls and Government stores.

(b) Total boycott of all Britishers in India, and of those Indians who are pro-British.

(c) Holding of public meetings and demonstrations in spite of official prohibition.

(d) Publishing of secret bulletins, and setting up of secret radio stations.

(e) Marching to the houses of British Government officials and demanding their departure from India.

(f) Organizing of processions for entering and occupying Government offices, Secretariat buildings, law courts, etc., with a view to hampering the administration.

(g) Arranging to punish police officers and prison officials who oppress and persecute the people.

(h) Erecting barricades in the streets where there is a likelihood of attack from the police and the military.

(i) Setting fire to Government offices and factories which are working for war purposes.

(j) Interrupting postal, telegraph and telephone communication as frequently as possible and in different places.

(k) Interrupting railway, bus and tram services, whenever there is a possibility of hampering the transport of soldiers or of war material.

(l) Destroying police stations, railway stations and jails in isolated places.

Comrades, I can assure you that as soon as this programme is put into operation, the administrative machinery can be brought to a standstill. In this connection, I must remind you that in a non-violent guerrilla campaign the peasantry always plays a decisive part. I am glad to observe that in several provinces—in Bihar and in the Central Provinces—the peasants are already in the forefront. I earnestly hope that Swami Sahajanand Saraswati and other peasant leaders, who together with the Forward Bloc started the fight long before Mahatma Gandhi, will now lead the campaign to a victorious conclusion. I will appeal to Swami Sahajanand and the leaders of the Kisan Movement to come forward and fulfil their leading role in the last phase of the fight. We want Swaraj for the masses, Swaraj for the workers and the peasants. It is, therefore, the duty of the workers and the peasants to emerge as the vanguard of the national army at a time when the future of India is being made. It is the law of nature that those who fight for liberty and win it will retain power and responsibility.

It is very encouraging, friends, to find that the people of the Indian States have begun to participate in this all-India struggle. Reports to the effect have already come from Baroda, Mysore and Hyderabad, and I am confident that the day is not far off when the States people will line up with the people of British India and form a common front against the combined forces of British Imperialism and the Indian Princes.

Most gratifying of all is the news that the clarion call of liberty has reached the ears and the hearts of our soldiers at home and abroad. They have no doubt been court-martialled with characteristic British brutality. But the fire is spreading from one place to another. A large number of soldiers have voluntarily deserted to join the Axis forces in Egypt and they are being welcomed with open arms by them. All the Indian fighting units have been withdrawn from the El Alamein front, as being unreliable. No wonder some supporters of British Imperialism have been brought up from India in order to impress the Indian troops. But their efforts have so far failed. I will be able to keep the outside world informed of all the facts of the Indian situation so as to secure from the enemies of Britain all the help that India may now need.

In conclusion I must point out that the campaign in India should be carried out for weeks and if necessary for months. If the non-violent guerrilla war should continue sufficiently long, freedom will come because British Imperialism will ultimately break down owing to the cumulative effect of defeats sustained on different fronts. Do not forget for one moment that the British Empire is now on its last legs.

At the same time, be prepared for every suffering because the apostles of freedom and democracy and the authors of the Atlantic Charter may do their very worst in the days to come. Before dawn comes the darkest hour. Be brave and continue the struggle, for freedom is at hand. Let your slogans be 'Now or Never', 'Victory or Death', 'Inquilab Zindabad'.[4]

To the People of Japan

India has not only been suffering so long from British rule, she has also been the victims of hypocritical, diabolical and mischievous propaganda. I therefore request you not to be misled by the enemy's propaganda and not to mistake India even unconsciously.

Today's India is not what the British have portrayed to you. In today's India one cannot see the same conditions which were found twenty-five years back. Indeed, today's India is completely different from the India which existed even seven years back.

In today's India, in new India, there are no caste or communal differences. She no longer bothers herself about metaphysical subtletics. New India only wants her national freedom; her only quest is to liberate herself completely from the British yoke.

By declaring war on our permanent enemy and by inflicting defeat after defeat on him, you have given us a rare opportunity to win our freedom by our own efforts. We fully realize this and are grateful to you. We fully realize that if we miss this chance we will not get such an opportunity again for another century. We are, therefore, determined to utilize the present opportunity. We firmly believe that we are sure to win this time and India will be free and will be for Indians.

Brothers and sisters of Japan! Some forty years ago, when I had first learnt to read and write, I heard that an Asian country called Japan had defeated the most powerful empire on earth in open warfare. Only then we came to know names like Mukden, Port Arthur and Tsushima. Young boys used to talk about Admiral Togo and General Nokki with ecstacy. A wave of joy and enthusiasm spread all over India. Even now it is astonishing to think about the Indians' celebration of those incidents which happened in a far-off place. The reason for such joy was the spontaneous feeling that not only Japan but the whole of Asia had been saved.

Some revolutionary leaders from India visited Japan in order to find out the source of Japan's power and to utilize that knowledge to their advantage. Similarly such great men as Gaguso Ogakura visited India and interpreted the courageous mind, philosophy and determination of Japan which had saved her and Asia.

Brothers and sisters of Japan! It is against such a background that we stand today in the midst of a World War. It is not surprising, therefore, to see me present among you now.

From the day I arrived in Japan, people here in every sphere have been showing great sympathy and hospitality to me. From very high authorities down to ordinary citizens, all have showered their affection on me.

Had I come here as a monarch or as an official representative I might think that you are showing formal hospitality to me. But I have not come in any such capacity. I have no other introduction except that I am coming from a country which had a glorious past, and that throughout my life I have been fighting against the enemy who deprived my country of her freedom.

Brothers and sisters! Great fighters in the cause of justice! I know that I am standing before you as the symbol of an ideal. By welcoming me you are only welcoming those millions of my countrymen who are fighting for their freedom in the midst of untold oppression and misery. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to you for the love and sympathy which you are extending to us in one of the darkest periods in our history. I assure you that we, who are like you the citizens of Asia, will never forget the timely help you are giving us.[5]

Women's Role in the National Movement

Sisters! I thank you with all my heart for the warm welcome you have given me this evening. I also thank you with all my heart for your enthusiastic participation in the mammoth meeting which was held opposite the Tokku Petsu-shi buildings. In spite of the rain you stuck to your seats till the end, and this moved me and my friends who participated in the meeting. I also know that some of you took your children there. Your bravery and enthusiasm thrilled all of us. I have the least doubt in my mind that your mission which has started auspiciously will grow rapidly.

You know well the service which Indian women have been rendering in the national movement during the past twenty years. From the time of India's regeneration, Indian women have been rigorously taking part in public life. This change can be clearly noticed. Since 1921 when the Congress was regenerated under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership, our sisters have performed great deeds not only in the Congress movements and the civil disobedience struggle but also in the secret revolutionary movements.

It will not be an exaggeration if I say that there are no public activities or departments of our national effort in which women are not participating. During the past many years of our national movement, women have been equal to men in undergoing sufferings with joy and courage. The Indian women never lagged behind anybody in going from village to village, without food and water, addressing meeting after meeting, in carrying the message of freedom from house to house, in conducting election campaigns, in taking out processions in spite of Government's bans and in the face of lathicharge by the merciless British police, and in putting up with the privations of prison-life, torture and humiliations. Last but not least, our heroic sisters also took an active part in the secret revolutionary activities. Many a time they have demonstrated that they too, if necessary, could use fire-arms as well as their brothers.

When I express my confidence that you are today prepared to fight and suffer for the sake of your motherland, I do not mean only to cajole you with empty words. I know the capabilities of our womanhood well. I can, therefore, say with certainty that there is no task which our women cannot undertake and no sacrifice and suffering which our women cannot undergo.

The time for launching the final campaign to liberate our motherland has now come. Only very rarely such opportunities occur in a nation's life. Surely such an opportunity will not come again in our life-time, nor even in the next hundred years. Only by God's grace have we got such an opportunity. If we seize it and sacrifice our all, we can surely liberate our country.

I know some among us have been thinking that British Imperialism was immortal and had no end. But I know that history wills it otherwise. History has taught us that every empier will fall in the same way as it has arisen. Similarly, the time has now come for the exit of British Imperialism from the world. We have seen with our own eyes the destruction of the British Empire in this part of the world. We are also going to witness its disappearance from India and other parts of the world.

Some years back I read a book on the British Empire by an Englishman named Meredith Conrad. Referring to India he says that once the Indians become united, the British will not be able to rule over them. He has further said that the empire which came into being in a day will die in a night.

I have mentioned in my broadcast that it took just seven days to drive them out of the stronghold of Singapore which they had built in the course of twenty years. Of course, I do not expect that the British can be driven out of India within a week. But you can mathematically calculate how many weeks it will take to drive out the British once we launch our final military action.

Sisters! I think every one of you believes that the time to begin our efforts for our salvation has come now. I also sincerely believe that you all wish this war to end in the defeat of Anglo-American Imperialism, because India can gain her freedom only if it is vanquished. It is for this reason that I have often been saying that the liberation of India is dependent on the victory of the Axis Powers. Today India and the Axis Powers are facing a common enemy. We, therefore, have a common goal. We have to fight against our common foe; we should be prepared to make any sacrifice and win our freedom by sharing the joys and sorrows equally among ourselves.

If we get freedom without sacrifice and suffering it will be of no avail, because we will not be able to preserve the freedom which it gained so easily. We shall, therefore, get our freedom only through our suffering. I firmly believe that we can give adequate support to our motherland by our total mobilization.

Therefore, sisters, you too must take your share in the coming struggle. You can serve in various capacities. Women have special skill in some specific fields. For example, you can serve in the hospitals. When our military campaigns have started, who will take care of our wounded soldiers? Will it not be shameful if our sisters do not come forward to comfort our wounded soldiers? Sisters, this is only a part of your duty. You can also help us in the recruitment of soldiers and collection of funds and supplies. Sometimes you may even have to take up arms.

To those who say that it will not be proper for our women to carry guns, my only request is that they look into the pages of our history. What brave deeds the Rani of Jhansi performed during the First War of Independence in 1857! Similarly, many brave women like the Rani of Jhansi are required in our Last War of Independence also. It is not important how many guns you can carry or how many cartridges you can fire. It is the spiritual force which will be generated by your heroic example that is important. Indians—both common people and members of the British Indian army—who are on the border areas of India, will, on seeing you march with guns on your shoulders, voluntarily come forward to receive the guns from you and carry on the struggle started by you. I do not have the least doubt about this. Therefore, I can say with certainty that the time has come for every Indian—man and woman, boy and girl—to come forward and make great sacrifices for liberating India.

Sisters, your energetic activities will not only inspire our countrymen living in Malaya, East Asia and Syonan but also those living within our country. I have no doubt that the 388 million Indians, on hearing about your efforts and your preparations for the fight, will be greatly inspired. I wish all your efforts are crowned with success. Your task is the same as ours. In this common task, in this struggle, in this suffering and sacrifice, all of us—without any distinction of man or woman, boy or girl, poor or rich, young or old—should stand shoulder to shoulder, should start the final struggle and should hasten the day of India's deliverance.

I once again thank you for the welcome you have given me today and for your enthusiastic participation in the public meeting the other day. I also thank you for the purse you have presented me today. I wish that all your activities for the liberation of our motherland end in victory.

As I told you earlier, the time for preparing ourselves for the final struggle has come. I have already announced to the world the formation of the Azad Hind Army. It is preparing itself for the war of liberation. I hope that the time will come for me to announce to the world that the Jhansi Rani Regiment also is preparing for the struggle. This work should be started immediately. I, therefore request all those who want to join the Jhansi Rani Regiment to come forward and give your names.[6]

Soviet Support for India

There was a time when German armies had advanced inside Russia right up to Stalingrad. I wonder how many people there were who, in those days, could imagine that the tide would turn, that one day the Soviet Army would be in Berlin. Germany's defeat is one of the surprises of this war. Clausewitz was perfectly right when he said that "war has many surprises". But there are more surprises to come, and some of these surprises will not be welcome to our enemies. You know very well that I have been always of the opinion that if Germany collapsed, it would be a signal for the outbreak of an acute conflict between the Soviets and the Anglo-Americans. That conflict has already broken out and it will be intensified in the days to come. The time is not far off when our enemies will realize that though they have succeeded in overthrowing Germany, they have indirectly helped to bring into the arena of European politics another power, Soviet Russia, that may prove to be a greater menace to British and American Imperialism than Germany was. The Provisional Government of Azad Hind will continue to follow international developments with the closest interest and endeavour to take the fullest advantage of them. The fundamental principle of our foreign policy has been and will be: Britain's enemy is India's friend.

It is clear by now that the war aims of the Soviet Union are quite different from those of the Anglo-Americans, although they had common enemy in Germany. This has been further confirmed at the San Francisco Conference where the Soviet Foreign Commissar M. Molotov refused to submit to the Anglo-American demands. In fact, M. Molotov went so far as to challenge the credentials of the puppets of Britain and America who came to represent India and the Philippines, respectively. The differences that became visible at the San Francisco Conference are only a precursor of a much wider and deeper conflict between the Soviet and the Anglo-Americans which the future has in store for the world.

While the conflict between the Soviet and the Anglo-Americans is going on, we should not fail to understand the real position and strength of our principal enemy, Britain. So long as Britain was without the aid of America, whether in Europe or in East Asia, she was badly beaten in every battle. Britain's recent successes have been due first and foremost to American leadership and American assistance. I have no doubt in my mind, and I have said so again and again in the past, that the days of the British Empire are drawing to a close. The British Empire is a decadent and decaying empire, and it is endeavouring now to prolong its life with the help of the United States of America. But though the life of an old man may be prolonged with the help of skilful doctors and efficacious medicines and injections, it can never be restored to useful vitality. The British Empire is endeavouring to march on with the help of American crutches, but these American crutches cannot help Britain very long. All that we have to do is to deliver a knock-out blow to British Imperialism in India, which is the basis of Britain's world Imperialism.

Our programme in East Asia remains unaltered. I demand from my countrymen in East Asia Total Mobilization. We want more money, more men and more materials to replenish the losses we have recently suffered. Above all, we want an indomitable will and unshakable determination. Let me remind you that it took the British full 100 years from 1757 to 1857 to subjugate India finally. Therefore if we are to fight on for a few years more, in order to recover our liberty, nobody should grudge it. I want you to cherish the same optimism and confidence in final victory as we have. It is this spiritual strength that is our sheet-anchor. India shall be free, and before long.[7]

Many Roads to Delhi

Friends! In our struggle for the freedom of our motherland, a crisis which had never been dreamt of has befallen us. You might feel that you have failed in your mission of liberating India. But I would say that it is only a temporary failure. No failure and no defeat can wipe out your earlier solid achievements. Many among you have, on the India-Burma border and inside India, undergone all kinds of trials and tribulations. Many of your comrades have laid down their lives on the battlefield and have become the immortal martyrs of Azad Hind. This great sacrifice can never go waste.

Friends! In this hour of darkness, I want you to conduct yourselves with the discipline, honour and strength befitting a real revolutionary army. You have already given proofs of your valour and self-sacrifice on the battlefield. Now, in this moment of temporary defeat, it is your duty to maintain your faith firm and determination strong. I know it for certain that even in this adverse situation you will hold your heads high and face the future with full confidence and hope.

Friends! I am conscious of the fact that, at this critical time, the 38 crores of people living in our motherland are looking towards us, the soldiers of the Indian liberation army. Be, therefore, true to India. Let not your faith in India's destiny be shaken. There are many roads to Delhi. And Delhi is still our goal. The sacrifices of your immortal comrades and yourselves will certainly bring us victory. There is no power on earth which can keep India in bondage. India will certainly be free and, that too, soon. Jai Hind!

India will be Free

Brothers and sisters! A great chapter in the history of India's freedom struggle has come to a close now. India's sons and daughters living in East Asia have secured a permanent place in this chapter.

By contributing men, money and supplies to the struggle for Indian independence, you have set up a shining example of patriotism and sacrifice. I can never forget your generous and enthusiastic response to my call of Total Mobilization. Like a perennial spring you sent your sons and daughters to the Azad Hind Fauj and Jhansi Rani Regiment. You gave generous donations in cash and kind to the war fund of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. In short, you have carried out your duty as the real sons and daughters of India. I am more aggrieved than you by the fact that your sufferings and sacrifices have not yielded immediate results.

Nevertheless they have not gone waste, because they have paved the path of deliverance of our motherland and will be a perpetual source of inspiration to Indians living all over the world. The future will bless you and will speak with pride of your sacrifices at the altar of Indian independence and of your solid achievements.

At this unprecedented juncture in our history I have a word for you. Do not be disheartened by our temporary defeat; be cheerful and optimistic. Above all, never lose your faith in the destiny of India. There is no power on earth which can keep India in bondage. India will be free and, that too, soon.

Jai Hind![9]

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Netaji's Philosophy of Life and the Relevance of his Ideas Today

Netaji represents the philosophy of realism. He said, "The Doctrine of Maya does not work. My life is incompatible with it, though I tried long and hard to make my life fit in with it. I have, therefore, to discard it". Guided by his philosophy of life, Netaji achieved much in his chequered career.

Congress' Activities

While the Congress seemed to be content with mino concessions from time to time by the British government, and had even tempered down its goal of the freedom struggle to that of achieving Dominion Status, Netaji refused to compromise on the objective of Purna Swaraj, i.e., complete independence. The goal for the INC was therefore set as "Full independence" in the form of a resolution moved by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Netaji also took a leading part in having the resolution to get off the ground.

The Creation of Indian National Army (I.N.A.)

The Second World War seemed like a golden opportunity to Bose and he left India for Germany to seek Nazi help in overthrowing the British. However, nothing much came of it, and he then left Germany for Japan. In South East Asia he reorganized Indian National Army initiated by Rash Behari Bose along with

General Mohan Singh. The Indian residents of South East Asia, fired up by the ideals of Netaji, gave him all humanly possible cooperation in the form of men and money.

It is to the credit of Netaji that he was able to elicit even from his most formidable political opponents while raising the army, the spirit of secularism which Netaji was able to infuse into the minds of all the personnels of the Army, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Anglo-Indians etc. all in a que to fight the imperialists. The most damaging act of the imperialists was their policy of "Divide and Rule" which led to the introduction of not joint but separate electorate. Aware of the power of the unifying force of his concept of dynamic nationalism developing dialectically, Netaji took the challenge and brought together all the Indian people of South East Asia under one banner of secularism irrespective of their caste, creed and religion. The I.N.A. remained firmly united as one and the only one secular entity when they were brought to India as prisoners of war for trial.

The Political Significance of I.N.A. in the National Struggle

Although the I.N.A. could not fulfil its military mission, its political mission was more than achieved. When the brave warriors of the patriotic army were brought to India for trial before the British Court, the whole of India protested as one voice. This national uproar was followed by RIN, strike, police unrest and discontentment in the Indian Army. Faced with the hostility, the British agreed to transfer power under the condition of partition of India, hoping that when the two new-born states of the divided India would fight among themselves they would return in the role of peace-makers. In their haste the national leadership compromised with the British imperialists. Thus the heroic exploits of Netaji's I.N.A., directly made the sub-continent free from the British yoke, although with the painful exchange of Partition.

International Significance of I.N.A. in the Anti-Imperialist Fight

Netaji's I.N.A. tremendously influenced all those who were struggling to free their motherland from the imperialists. It marked the turning point in the beginning of the defeat of aggressive imperialism all the world over.

President Nasser of Egypt nationalised Suez Canal Company previously owned by Anglo-French Imperial Power. This was strongly resented by the Imperial Authority who, in an act of aggression, whose combined forces invaded Egypt. The world public opinion of the progressive forces proved to be too much and the combined Army had to withdraw. The moral defeat of the Anglo-French forces in Egypt might be regarded as the second in importance in the chronology of historical events for the defeat of aggressive imperialism. This was followed by a series of such events in succession, withdrawal of France from Algeria, American defeat in Vietnam, etc. Thus aggressive imperialism became a thing of the past not only in Asia but also in Africa, nay in the whole of the world. Netaji's I.N.A. had set the precedent.

Relevance of Netaji's Concept of Nationalism Today

Apart from the Gandhian and Nehruvian approaches towards maintaining communal harmony, there was another and a more successful experiment in solving the Hindu-Muslim problem during the national movement. It was the approach of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose as he applied it to the Azad Hind Movement and the I.N.A.

Gandhiji praised this remarkable achievement with the following words:

"Although the I.N.A. failed to achieve its immediate objective, they have a lot to their credit of which they might well be proud. Greatest among these was to gather together under one banner men of all religions and races of India and to infuse into them the spirit of solidarity and oneness, to the utter exclusion of all communal and parochial sentiments. It is an example which we should all emulate."[2]

The I.N.A. is a vivid and inspiring illustration of what Indians are capable of achieving under proper leadership. The communal problem was not treated in the I.N.A. in isolation but its solution was sought as a part of the national effort to secure independence and national rejuvenation. It was an effort to change the outlook and behavior of Hindus, Muslims and other communities through common collective effort.

The motto of the I.N.A. was "Unity, Faith, Sacrifice"—unity among all sections of the people, faith in India's destiny and sacrifice for the national cause.

Netaji was a deeply religious man, but he never flaunted his religious beliefs. His was not an atheistic secularism, which would have been repugnant to most Indian religious groups. He wanted everyone to follow his or her religion privately, while combining actively with others in a common national effort. In this on-going process of interaction the inherited narrow mentality and stereotyped behaviour of individuals were altered.

Netaji wrote: "It is absolutely necessary to stress the economic issues which cut across communal divisions and barriers. The problems of poverty and unemployment, illiteracy and disease, taxation and indebtedness affect alike the Hindus and Muslims and other sections of the people. It should be easy to explain to our masses that their solution depends on the prior solution of the political problem, i.e. on the establishment of a national, popular and democratic government." ("*Crossroads*", page 7)

Netaji had set the example of a new concept of secularism. "For him (Netaji) there were no religious or provincial differences. He refused to recognize any. He looked at everyone—Hindu, Muslim, Sikh—without distinction and his spirit animated his men", wrote Gen. Shahnawaz.[3]

Gen. Shahnawaz added: "In the I.N.A. there was no 'communal feeling' of any sort, in spite of the fact that every man had full liberty to practise his religion in any way he liked."[4]

Not only communalism but, according to Cpt. Ram Singh Rawal of the I.N.A., also untouchability was abolished in the INA. He wrote in an article published in "*Harijan*" on 31-3-1946 that all used to live in the same barracks, there was no separate mess, they lived together, ate at the same table and worked together. To achieve a close-knit unity on these lines in those days seems nothing short of a miracle.

Netaji Bose said that "communalism will go only when the communal mentality goes." ("*Forward Bloc*", 24-2-1940).

Sectarian attitudes were restrained, if not completely eradicated, in the I.N.A., through the generation of a nationalist spirit dedicated to the freedom struggle.

"What we in India would like to have is a progressive system which will fulfil the social needs of *the whole people* and will be based on national sentiment", Netaji wrote.[5]

Netaji's India

The name of Subhas has come to be associated with impetuosity of youth, dauntless courage, and working up to his convictions against odds with reckless abandon.

He was a visionary, and like all visionaries, was far ahead of his times. Almost bordering on the utopian his ideas earned him the titles of a Fascist, a Socialist, a Marxist.

For this stormy petrel of India, freedom was a concept which applied to the social and economic conditions of the masses, the women, the peasants and the labour. With him 'freedom' was another name for 'Freedom for the rich as well as for the poor; freedom for all individuals and for all occasions." It implied: "Not only emancipation from political bondage but also equal distribution of wealth, abolition of caste barriers and social inequalities and destruction of communalism and religious intolerance." It was a freedom "for all sections, for all minorities and for all individuals." To him, freedom, equality and fraternity were one and indivisible. In free India, according to Bose:

"Women will have to be given an equal status with men, in law as well as in social matters; the social barriers which put the brand of inferiority on certain sections of castes owing to their birth, will have to be ruthlessly demolished; the inequalities of wealth which stand in the way of the social advancement will have to be removed and equal opportunities for education and development will have to be given to all for shouldering the responsibility of reconstructing society and of carrying on the administration. In society, in the body politic and in the economic world, each individual should be as free as any other and should enjoy the same status."

In a Nutshell

"Equal opportunities for all, equitable distribution of wealth, abolition of all social barriers, including caste and emancipation from foreign rule—these should be some of the basic principles of the new society we want to build."

He was strongly in favour of abolition of landlordism and nationalisation of land, welfare of the peasants and workers, the state planning of industries and agriculture, a "new and improved monetary credit system", and unification of "all the radical organizations under a national executive". It would be a Federal Government with a strong Centre "with dictatorial powers for some years to come, in order to put India on her feet." Not surprisingly this earned him the label of a Fascist.

Subhas also did not agree with Pandit Jawaharlal's views that "there is no middle road between Fasism and Communism" Nehru was in favour of a modified form of Communism because Fascism was to him "nothing more than a crude and brutal effort of the present capitalist order to preserve itself at any cost", while "the basic ideology of Communism and its scientific interpretation of history" seemed to be very 'sound'."

"Especially when we have seen with our own eyes that another experiment (that of Mahatmaji) made in India has roused profound interest all over the world."

Subhas Chandra was a complete 'Nationalist'. According to him:

"Ours is a struggle not only against British Imperialism— but against world imperialism as well, of which the former is the keystone. We are, therefore, fighting not for the cause of India alone but of humanity as well."

"Our main task in this age is to end Imperialism and win national independence for the Indian people. When freedom comes, the age of national reconstruction will commence and that will be socialist phase of our movement. In the present phase of our movement, leftists will be those who will wage an uncompromising fight with Imperialism. Those who will waver and vacillate in their struggle against Imperialism—those who tend towards a compromise with it—cannot by any means be leftists."

As regards the form of socio-political structure, he used to say:

"In the next phase of our movement, leftism will be synonymous with Socialism—but in the present phase the words 'Leftists' and 'Anti-Imperialists' should be inter-changeable."

In reaction to Pandit Jawaharlal's views of India going in for some sort of Communism, Netaji's stand would be:

"Unless we are at the end of the process of evolution or unless we deny evolution altogether, there is no reason to hold that our choice is restricted to two (Fascism and Communism) alternatives."

When he was in Europe in 1933, the great interest be took in the political movements there made people think that had turned a Fascist. He strongly repudiated the charge and maintained that though it was absolutely necessary for everybody to study all the modern movements abroad, it was equally necessary for Indians to chalk out the future lines of the progress "in conformity with our past history and our present and future requirements."

Regarding the "internal and external policies" that India ought to adopt, he was against acceptance of any particular dogma *in toto* and felt the principle which is to be adopted is that:

"No standpoint or theory in socio-political affairs can be the last word in human wisdom. The socio-political theories and institutions of modern nations are the product of their history, environments and needs. They are liable to change or develop just as human life is. Moreover, it should be remembered that some of most interesting institutions of present day are still under experiments. Time must elapse before they could be declared to be successful and in the meantime we should not mortgage our intellect anywhere."

He said:

"We shall build our own society and politics according to our own ideals and according to our needs. This should be the aim and object of every Indian."

The Relevance of Subhas' Ideas

Though a lot has changed since Netaji passed into history, some of his ideas have not lost their lustre and continue to be relevant even today.

To Netaji Indian struggle for freedom was not an isolated event; he treated it as a part of a bigger world process. He said in his Congress Presidential address at Haripura in 1938:

"Ours is a struggle not only against British imperialism, but against world imperialism as well."

And: "We are therefore fighting not for the cause of India alone, but of humanity as well." India freed means humanity saved.

Once India was able to break its shakles in 1947, not only the British but also other empires started to collapse, as he had visualized.

He knew that in a modern, scientific world a conglomeration of independent states was not enough; there was need for an international order.

Regarding the basis of such an order, he said, while addressing the Japanese students at the Tokyo University in November, 1944.

"The only basis on which we can set an international order is freedom, justice and reciprocity."

As an uncompromising fighter for India's freedom, he believed that no nation, however, big or powerful, has the right to dominate any other nation which, unfortunately, has always been the case. For an international order, freedom of the nations was the first pre-requisite.

Justice, according to him, was the second precondition. As a powerful nation has no right to deprive another of its political rights, within a nation powerful and richer sections have no right to deprive the majority of its population of basic human, economic and social rights. They must have justice.

The third prop of this order, according to Netaji, is reciprocity, that is, "reciprocal condition, mutual action principle or practice of give and take." All this can be done only on the basis of complete equality among nations, big and small.

Netaji made very thorough analysis as to why the League of Nations, formed after the First World War, failed. After the USA withdrew, England and France remained as its sponsor—nations, Netaji observed:

"Now these two leading Powers, instead of setting an example of unselfishness, tried to use the League of Nations for their selfish interests and for their own benefits."

He concluded that if leading nations do not set an example of unselfishness, then an international order can never work.

Religion, in its highest form, had been an intrinsic part of Netaji's personality and thought process.

Netaji said in a speech in Tokyo:

"It is very difficult to set up a world order suddenly out of nothing and make it a success." But if you begin in the region, where friendship and reciprocity between the nations can be developed and if in that region you meet with success, then that example can be emulated by other nations in other parts of the world. So the method of setting up a regional order is the only way in which the world order can gradually be built up."

He said, "I have every faith in mankind. If it is possible for one individual to be unselfish to live a life at a higher moral level, I see no reason why an entire nation cannot also rise to that level."

He added in the same speech that for a project such as a world order to succeed only a few politicians or leaders to sponsor it and the rest of the nation remain apathetic or indifferent, was certainly not enough. There should be widespread support among the people for this idea.

In the interest of the teeming millions in this area, the idea of a regional order should not be left to a few politicians and leaders, as Netaji had warned. There must be a genuine people's movement for it across the borders of South Asian countries on this vital issue based on "freedom, justice and reciprocity."

The practical relevance of Netaji's ideas is to reshape radically our regional order first so that eventually we can irrevocably establish a world peace order.

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The Staunch Nationalist

The name of Subhas Chandra Bose instantly evokes an emotion of legendary heroism. Addressed as 'Netaji' by his own countrymen, most of the wartime leaders of East Asia called him 'the greatest revolutionary of our age'. No other rebel leader before Subhas ever dared to literally girdle the earth in a quest of fulfilment of revolutionary mission. None succeeded like him to build up revolutionary organizations in so many countries, straddling the two continents of the East and West within an extraordinary short span of time and then launch the biggest ever known war of national liberation of one's own country from outside its national frontiers. Netaji has also been the only Indian leader who had directly influenced anti-imperialist struggles of so many countries of South-East Asia.

When Mahatma Gandhi witnessed the national adoration for Subhas, he wrote in his *Harijan* in January 1946, 'The I.N.A. has cast a spell on us. Netaji's name is one to conjure with'.

Gandhi was a 'practical reformer and not an ideologist', according to Acharya Kripalani, the ablest among the Gandhian analysts. Nehru adopted Marxian metaphysics, tempering it with democratic values.

Nehru influenced the ideology of most of the pre-freedom days Congress Socialists. In his ideological conviction Bose was, however, the only exception who accepted neither the absolutist value of Gandhian non-violence nor the totalitarian metaphysics of Marxism on the other. Bose, although known in the days of the struggle for Indian freedom as the principal architect of Indian Leftism and a convinced socialist, preferred to follow a distinct ideology of his own.

Netaji's Views

To Bose Indian nationalism had a characteristic of universal value, which he considered as a unique phenomenon in the history of world civilization. To him Indian nationalism was not merely a reaction of the British rule in India.

Like his spiritual 'guru' Swami Vivekananda, Subhas Chandra believed that the essence of Indian nationalism had its origin in the spiritual and cultural heritage of India. In his book, *The Indian Struggle* he neatly dissertated the character of Indian civilization to show that despite periodic political fragmentations of India, a common cultural and spiritual nexus kept the Indian people bound together in an abiding feeling of belonging to the common country of India as their common motherland and sharing common emotion of their identity as Indians.

Analysing the history of world civilization Subhas Chandra observed, 'Unlike other ancient civilisations, such as Egypt or Babylon, Phoenicia or Greece, the ancient culture and civilisation of India is not dead'.

Bose's study of the history of Indian civilization helped him to discover the philosophy of Indian nationalism. It was this philosophy of synthesis, which enabled the people of India to adopt a tolerant outlook and understanding of the essence of different values and synthesis them in a creative spirit to absorb them in their cultural life.

This philosophy of synthesis, formed the cardinal principle of the ideological outlook of Subhas Chandra Bose. He, called his political 'philosophy of Synthesis' 'Samyavad', meaning a spirit of harmony of different socio-political values.

In this last known major speech that he made in the Tokyo University in 1944, Netaji said: 'It would be our task in India to evolve a system that would be a synthesis of the systems in vogue in different parts of the world.... what we in India like to have is a progressive system which will fulfil the social needs of the whole people and will be based on national sentiment. In other words, it will be a synthesis of Nationalism and Socialism.

Netaji's Postage Stamps

A little known fact is that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose brought out postage stamps to be used in the liberated areas of Indian soil. A set of ten stamps with the legend "Azad Hind" was designed under Netaji's direction and printed in Germany by the Reich Printing Plant in Berlin with the assistance of the German Postal Administration. The Farmer, Woman with Charka and Soldier motifs are repeated on stamps of different denominations.

The supply of the stamps was late in reaching the I.N.A. headquarters. Therefore, Bose had to hurriedly print two new stamps in Rangoon in the denominations of one pice and one anna. The stamps featured a corner of the Red Fort, the writing "Arzihukumate Azad Hind" (Provisional Government of Free India), and the slogan "Chalo Dilli".

Some of these two stamps were even used in some parts of Manipur state, which was then occupied by the I.N.A.. As Netaji's I.N.A. was defeated by the British forces in 1945, and as a consequence, had to surrender, the remaining "Chalo Dilli" stamps were confiscated by the enemy forces. Unfortunately, the Azad Hind stamps never reached the I.N.A. It now appears that the entire stock was bought by a German stamp dealer, and later from him by collectors.

Commemorating Netaji's 67th birth anniversary, the Postal Department issued two stamps on 23 January, 1964, one depicting Bose and the I.N.A. insignia and the other showing Bose leading the I.N.A. troops. On 21 October, 1968, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the Azad Hind Government another deep blue stamp was issued.

Netaji's Economic Planning

Subhas Chandra Bose was the first Indian leader, who as the President of 1938 Haripura Congress first voiced the need of economic planning in India. It is admitted officially as if Pandit Nehru was the architect of Indian National Planning. It was Bose who was the pioneer to outline the basic objectives of economic planning and set up the first National Planning Committee of

India. Initiating the idea of planning he asked the members of the first Planning Committee to evolve an economic strategy to build up key industries at the same time developing medium and small scale and village industries and giving equal emphasis to industrial and agricultural growing in synchronised harmony.

Economic planning was foremost in his mind. Even during the frenzied days of Azad Hind War it was not far from his mind. Re-emphasising the need for economic planning in Free India he said in his Tokyo Address: India is in favour of socialist system, in which initiative will not be left to private individuals, but the State will take over the responsibility for solving economic questions. Whether it is a question of industrializing the country or modernizing agriculture, we want the State to step in and take over the responsibility and put through reforms within short period of time.... to solve the problems of poverty and unemployment and to give education to the people'.

Following Vivekananda's influence Subhas Chandra crusaded for the abolition of caste system in India. Bose attached greater importance to the work of abolition of castes system than dealing with the class struggle of the working class as a prior task.

Netaji was obsessed with a dream,—of a Mission of India. He said repeatedly, 'Even at the risk of being called a chauvinist I will say that India has a mission to fulfil'. And this mission for Indian pilgrim, as he liked to call himself, was a mission to explore an ideology for the mankind beyond the phase of communism. He said in his London speech in 1933, 'In the 17th Century, England made a remarkable contribution to the world civilisation through her ideas of constitutional and democratic government. Similarly in the 18th century, France made the most wonderful contribution to the culture of the world through her ideas of 'Liberty, equality and fraternity'. Germany made the remarkable gift during the 19th century, through her Marxist Philosophy. During the 20th century, Russia has enriched the world through her achievement in proletarian revolution, proletarian government and proletarian culture. The next remarkable contribution to the culture and civilisations of the world India will be called upon to make. He echoed and reechoed this faith many times and once more in concluding his Tokyo speech, which was a kind of his ideological testament, he said 'India will try to move to the next stage of political and social evolution.'

Subhas: A Great Nationalist

Bose devoted nearly twenty-five years of his spectacular life (1921-45) to the cause of national freedom. His whole life was dotted with setbacks, sacrifices and adventures. He succeeded in organising the historic I.N.A., the I.I.L. in administering the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and even in hoisting the independence flag after freeing the Manipur area of India (on 18 March, 1944), although fate snatched him away before he could witness the independence of the country itself.

Bose was put behind bars eleven times and spent about 9 years in jail, in exile and in detention. N.G. Jog says: "On no other top-ranking leader did the wrath of British rulers fall as frequently and relentlessly as on Bose." Bose had gone on hunger strike twice in jail and even had to bear the blows of a severe lathi charge. His frequent incarcerations took their toll on his health, which continued to be a problem when he was Congress President in 1939. As President during the A.I.C.C. meeting (in March 1939) at Tripuri, Bose was so sick that doctors had to attend to him and Maulana Azad had to preside over the session.

Bose was so completely committed to the cause of freedom that he postponed even the most private happiness like marriage up to 1942.

Even though Bose fared well in the I.C.S. exam, he was not at all enamoured by its promises of riches and glory. He was destined to devote his whole life to the cause of the freedom of the motherland. As a great patriot he considered himself to be a traitor if he served the very masters who had enslaved his country.

Bose's resignation from the I.C.S. (22nd April, 1921) was a great sacrifice and one which few were prepared to do. That was a unique example. One of his fellow students in England was inspired on the occasion to write a poem on him:

"Bullets all round him hiss
But fall at his feet to kiss,
This occasion we never can miss.
To thee, O hero, we bow!"

Bose's resignation so inspired the others that his friends like D.K. Roy and Kashitish Prasad Chattopadhyaya too discontinued their studies for the I.C.S. It was then, disillusioned by the attitude of the Congress, that Bose turned his attention to foreign powers and decided to fight the freedom struggle from out of India.

Subhas and I.N.A.

Bose succeeded Rash Behari Bose as the President of the I.I.L. (4.7.1943), in South-East Asia, after coming over there from Germany on invitation. As the Supreme Commander, he reorganized the I.N.A. with a separate Jhansi Rani Laxmibai Regiment of women soldiers under the Captaincy of Laxmi Swaminathan, and also a *Bala Sena*. The I.N.A. was, undoubtedly, his greatest achievement and significant contribution to the cause of his mission.

He organised the Provisional Government of Free India (on 21 Oct. 1943) and at its inaugural ceremony he swore: "I swear by God that I will do my best to emancipate India and its 380 million people. I will abide by this oath until my death. I will make every possible effort to bring freedom to the Indian people. I also swear to devote myself to the good of India even after its emancipation."

He was successful in organising the national government and I.N.A. In his address (on 6th Nov. 1943) at the Greater East Asia Conference, held in Tokyo on 5th-6th Nov. 1943, an emotionally charged Bose said, "It does not matter who among us will live to see India free. It is enough that India should be free that the Anglo-American Imperialism is wiped out of India". In a sense, Bose was the first Premier of India before independence (in 1943), as the Premier of the Provisional Government of India. (Nehru was the Premier of the Interim Government of India in 1946). As the Premier of the Provisional Government, Bose toured the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the part of India to be liberated first (on 30th Dec. 1943) and appointed Lt. Col. A.D. Lokanathan, the Chief Commissioner of the Islands.

Bose wanted his I.N.A., to march to Delhi via Imphal on (7.1.1944) he shifted his Provisional Government to Rangoon to speed up the march to Delhi. He informed his intention to General Kawabe, the Japanese Commander-in-Chief in Burma.

"The Indian National Army should be the spearhead of the whole advance into India. The first drop of blood to be shed on Indian soil be that of a member of the Indian National Army." "Any liberation of India secured through Japanese sacrifice" thought Bose, "is worse than slavery."

The Imphal operation (from 15th March to 9th July, 1944) marked decisive stage of the freedom struggle of Bose and his I.N.A. It was also a period when the Second World War in Europe and Asia was poised at a critical juncture. The fate of Bose and his I.N.A., was closely linked to the Japanese military strength. Japan deployed her three Divisions (15th, 31st and 33rd). One I.N.A. Division under Col. Kiani was attached to a Japanese Division (15th). While bidding farewell to the Subhas Brigade, which was passing through Rangoon to the front (on 3 Feb., 1944), Bose said: "Blood is calling to blood... There in front of you is the road our pioneers have built. We shall march along that road. We shall carve our way through the enemy's ranks or, if God wills, we shall die a martyr's death. And in our last sleep we shall kiss the road which will bring our Army to Delhi. The road to Delhi is the road to freedom. On to Delhi !"

An I.N.A. Regiment, commanded by Col. Sahgal, crossed the Burma-India border and set its foot on Indian soil on 18th March, 1944. Then followed the Japanese Army on 22nd March, 1944. The same day Bose persuaded from Rangoon the Indian army and officials to defect from the British authority and to cooperate with the Indo-Japanese Army. The same day, Gen. Tojo, the Japanese Premier, issued a statement from Tokyo, assuring the Indians of handing over liberated India to the provisional Government of India.

Kohima fell to the Indo-Japanese Army (6.4.1944). Imphal, the decisive position was the next target. Netaji told the Indians in liberated areas on 4th April, 1944: "The Provisional Government of Free India is the only lawful government of the Indian people..... Rally round your own Government and thereby help to preserve and safeguard your own liberty."

Bose, as the Premier of the Provisional Government, appointed Lt. Col. A.C. Chatterji as the Governor of the liberated areas of India.

However, human failure and Nature's fury sealed the fate of the Indo-Japanese army and Bose. Imphal did not fall and Lt. Gen. Mutaguchi, the Japanese Commander of the 15th Army blocked the Imphal-Kohima road and snuffed out all chances of the Indo-Japanese Army and of Bose.

"Had he (Bose) only been able to take Imphal", said Bhulabhai Desai the Chief Counsel, who defended the I.N.A. officers during the trial at the Red Fort, "the bulk of the Indian Army in India would have deserted the British and flocked to swell the ranks of the Indian National Army."

Bose's plan failed mainly because of the failure of the Japanese army in the Imphal operation.

The torrential rains which destroyed the communication and supply lines, were the other reasons for the failure of Indo-Japanese army in the Imphal operation. Without arms, ammunition, air cover, food and medical facilities, the I.N.A. on which there was a greater responsibility suffered a lot. A Japanese newspaper wrote on 1 Nov., 1944. "The fact that the Indian National Army fought side by side with the Japanese Army on the Indo-Burma border under the handicap of shortages of all kinds of supplies should go down as a glorious chapter in the history of the Indian independence movement."

Maj. Gen Shah Nawaz Khan, the Commander of the Subhas Brigade of the I.N.A. Division in the operation himself revealed: "With a clear conscience I can say that the Japanese did not give full aid and assistance to the Azad Hind Fouj during their assault on Imphal. In fact, I am right in saying that they let us down badly, and had it not been for their betrayal of the I.N.A., the history of the Imphal campaign might have been a different one. My own impression is that the Japanese did not trust the I.N.A. They had found out through their liaison officers that the I.N.A. would not accept Japanese domination in any way, and that they would fight the Japanese in case they attempted to replace the British. The Japanese were frightened of making the I.N.A. too powerful."

In his massage to the new Premier Koiso of Japan, Bose said, "I hereby declare that we will fight side by side with Japanese and other friendly powers until we win independence crushing our common enemy."

Bose was devoted to his mission of independence. He wanted liberation for his people not glory for himself. When he was honoured by the Government of Japan in Oct. 1944 with the highest decoration, "the First Order of the Rising Sun," he returned it gracefully. Bose replied: "I would like to accept it together with my men when we have won independence."

Possessed of an indomitable will Netaji did not surrender to his enemies throughout his life. The Second World War came to an end with the surrender of all the Axis powers. Italy fell first, then Germany surrendered (on 7th May, 1945) and finally Japan (on 15th August, 1945). Bose's I.N.A. was the only force which did not surrender at all! A.S. Ayer, Bose's Minister for Propaganda described the effect of Japan's surrender, on Bose: "Netaji heard the news and after one characteristic 'um' he was deep in thought for a fleeting second. The next second he was absolutely his normal self. He first broke into a smile and almost his first words were 'So that is that. Now what next" ... He was already thinking of the next move. He was not going to be beaten. Japan's surrender was not India's surrender... He would not admit defeat... said: 'Well, don't you see we are the only people who have not surrendered?"

Bose refused to believe or agree that his mission had failed. In his Special Order of the Day (15th Aug., 1945) he addressed the I.N.A.: "You may perhaps feel that you have failed in your mission to liberate India. But let me tell you that this failure is only of a temporary nature." No setback and no defeat can undo your positive achievements of the past. Many of you have participated in the fight along the Indo-Burman frontier and also inside India and have gone through hardship and sufferings of every sort. Many of your comrades have laid down their lives on the battlefield and have become the immortal heroes of Azad Hind. This glorious sacrifice can never go in vain."

Bose firmly believed that freedom was India's destiny. He said: "The roads to Delhi are many and Delhi still remains our goal. The sacrifice of your immortal comrades and of yourselves will certainly achieve their fulfilment. There is no power on earth that can keep India enslaved. India shall be free and before long."

Even the shadow of death after the aircrash could not make his aim waver. Bose, with death minutes away, was thinking of the destiny of the country. He whispered in the ears of Habibur Rahman, his co-passenger, who was lying wounded by his side: "When you go back, tell my country that I fought to the last for the freedom of my country. And no power could now keep our country in bondage any longer. They should continue the struggle. India will be free before long."

A Prolific Writer and Journalist

Apart from being a brilliant orator, Bose was also a writer of eminence. *The Indian Struggle* (1920-34) was his first book, written during his exile in Europe and was first published in London on 17 January, 1935. Its reprint was issued in India in 1948 (Compiled by the Netaji Research Bureau). Earlier, in 1942 its Italian edition was published.

Romain Rolland, in his letter (22 February, 1935) to Bose was full of praises for the book: "so interesting seemed the book to us that I ordered another copy so that my wife and sister should have one each. It is an indispensable book for the history of Indian Movement. In it you show the best qualities of the historian: lucidity and high equity of mind. Rarely it happens that a man of action as you are is apt to judge without party spirit."

An Indian Pilgrim (an unfinished autobiography), written in ten days in December 1937 at Badgastein, Austria, was his second contribution.

He had also written a number of articles to the press in India (notably to *The Modern Review*) and Europe.

Bose weilded the pen as deftly as he weilded the tongue. He was a master of the written and spoken word. Bose was also a journalist. He edited *The Banglar Katha*, a journal started by C.R. Das to propagate the Swarajist Party and 'The Forward Bloc, a weekly started in August, 1939) by himself, as the mouth-piece of his party, the Forward Bloc.

In private, Bose was a man of few words. He had a sense of humour, and used to enjoy giving nicknames while chatting with his close friends like Dilip Kumar Roy. He nicknamed the B.B.C. as the Bluff and Bluster Corporation, A.I.R. as Anti Indian Radio!

A Nationalist

Bose was a thorough nationalist. Influenced by the cosmopolitan environment in which he grew up, he was neither communal nor parochial in his outlook. He completely supported Hindu-Muslim unity. "On two of the most crucial occasions in his life, first, when he travelled by submarine from Germany to Japan, and next when he flew from Singapore on that fatal January his companions were Muslims, Abid Hassan and Habibur Rahman respectively."

Most of his devoted Generals were Muslims—Shah Nawaz Khan and the Kiani brothers. Netaji had transcended the barriers of religion. Muslims were ready willingly to serve, suffer and if needed, lay down their lives for Bose. Habib, a Muslim merchant of Rangoon, bought in auction sale Bose's garland by donating all his property worth a crore of rupees.

Not many know that the national anthem of the Provisional Government of Netaji (*Subh sukh chain ki barkha barse Bharat Bhag hai jaga*) was composed by a Muslim by name Hussain. Bose helped directly and indirectly to open the Hindu temples for non-Hindus. Gen A.C. Chatterji has made mention of a visit of Bose with his officers, including non-Hindus to a Hindu Chettiar Temple, in his book, *India's Struggle for Freedom* (Chakravarthy, Chatterji & Co., Calcutta, 1947).

For Bose national unity was supreme. In an interview with Dr. Meghnad Saha, the famous scientist, Bose said, "To my mind the problem of unity is largely a psychological problem. People must be educated and drilled to feel that they are a nation. Other factors like language, dress, food, etc., may help unity but cannot create it."

"A real unity", he said, "is a source of infinite strength; superficial unity is only a source of weakness." In his lengthy historic letter (dated 28th March, 1939) Bose wrote to Nehru, informing him of the real role of unity. "The unity we strive for or maintain must be the unity of action and not the unity of inaction. Unity is a revolutionary movement; is not an end in itself, but only a means. It is desirable only so long as it furthers progress. The moment it tends to hamper progress it becomes an evil."

Bose was staunchly against communal electorates, communal representations and communal reservations. He wanted that, as Hugh Toye writes, "barriers of wealth, class and caste must go; women must have equality of status with men, and there must be no distinction between Hindus and Muslims at election times. He regarded communal representation in the legislatures as a device for dividing India and supporting foreign rule. He (Bose) was sure that if the communal question were ignored it would vanish, and this view he held to the close of his life."

"As a temporary arrangement", Bose used to say, "there may be reservation of seats if that is found necessary.... Nationalism and separate electorates are self contradictory. Separate electorates are wrong in principle..."

Bose was bitterly against the British and their divide and rule policy which were responsible for the flaring tentions and growing disharmony between Hindus and Muslims "I have no doubt in my mind", said Bose in his presidential speech read out in absentia, at the Third Indian Political Conference held in London on 10 June, 1933, "that real unity among the Indian people can never be achieved as long as British Rule exists in India."

Bose could see beyond the immediate present and had anticipated the partition of India, because of this policy of the British about nine years earlier, in his presidential address to the Haripura Congress (19-2-1938).

"It is a well-known truism", Bose said, "that every empire is based on the policy of divide and rule, But I doubt if any empire in the world was practiced this policy so skilfully, systematically and ruthlessly as Great Britain."

"Jai Hind", a great slogan through which Bose strengthened nationalism and national unity, became a popular form of greeting among the I.N.A. men. "In India", said one sepoy, "We have many religions and many gods. But here everything is Jai Hind." Bose suggested Hindustani in Roman script as the national language.

The Epitome of Leadership

The title 'Netaji' aptly befitted Bose. His organisational ability and capacity was legendary. Gen. J.K. Bhonsle (one of the Generals), described in his article the leadership quality of Bose: "(Netaji captured the hearts of soldiers with his deep personal interest in their welfare. He took great interest to understand the various military problems that came up before him. His grasp of detail was unique. If any one of us placed before him a plan or a scheme, he would not be satisfied until he discussed it in all its varied aspects. It was not an easy task to convince him of the soundness of a scheme, but once he was satisfied, he would tell us to go full steam ahead. We were given the fullest liberty to use our discretion and judgement in working out details.... If we succeeded, we were given full credit in public. If we failed, a word of blame was uttered in private."

So great was the impact he had on his colleagues and followers that a bleeding young jawan, by the road-side after the Imphal operation, refused the application of bandage and said, "No, no, let it bleed, for Netaji has said that if we give him our blood, he will give us freedom,"

An Intelligent Diplomat

Bose was a man of strong convictions, and yet he had mastered the fine art of diplomacy. As an individual, without credentials, he contacted Mussolini the Italian Fascist authority, Hitler, the German Nazi authority and Premier Tojo, the Japanese Nipponian authority. To him, he was not just a single individual but a representative of his country and his countrymen. Though committed to the cause of India's freedom, he did not confine his thinking to that of Indian problems only, but thought of humanity as a whole. He said in England in January 1938, after his election as the President of the Congress: "India's problems, after all, are world problems. On our close contacts with the progressive movements abroad will depend not only the salvation of India but also of the suffering humanity as well."

Bose wanted "to chalk out the future lines of our progress in conformity with our past history and our present and future requirements." He wanted "a sympathetic but critical attitude towards other lands and nations." He tried to distinguish clearly between internal and external policy. "In the domain of our external policy", Bose wrote, "our own socio-political views or predilections should not prejudice us against people or nations holding different views, whose sympathy we may nevertheless be able to acquire.

This is a universal cardinal principle in external policy..... Therefore, in our external policy, we should heartily respond to any sympathy for Indian which we may find in any part of the world."

Bose openly challenged the attitude of the Congress and of Nehru of condemning the fascist nations like Germany and Italy and not condemning the imperialist countries like England and France. In his lengthy historic letter (28.3.1939), Bose attacked Nehru's policy on international affairs: "Frothy sentiments and pious platitudes do not make a foreign policy. It is no use condemning countries like Germany and Italy all the time on the one hand and, on the other, giving a certificate of good conduct to British and French imperialism."

Bose was a democrat and not a fascist. He wanted to organise the youth, the workers and the peasants and to give them adequate representation.

Bose had envisaged people oriented plans and programmes for future India. He wanted India to be united under a strong central government. There had to be a strong and disciplined party which would govern the entire nation. He wanted that this party should uphold the values of justice for all sections of the people and for freedom from bondage of every kind—whether political, economic or social. It should be based on the principle of equality and work for the destruction of all artificial barriers whether of religion, creed, caste, sex or wealth. Its aim should be to create a really democratic state.

Bose had a strong belief that India had a mission to lead the world in every respect. "I would say to my countrymen that India has a mission to fulfil, and it is because of this that India still lives. There is nothing mystic in this world mission."

"India is the keystone to the world edifice", again Bose said, "and a free India spells the destruction of imperialism throughout the world. Let us, therefore, rise to the occasion and make India free so that humanity may be saved."

Netaji dreamt of an Indian nation—alive, self-confident and filled with a spirit of equality and integration of all races, all religious communities, all castes, all linguistic fraternities with an emotional identity characteristically as Indians. His Azad Hind Fauj, was a manifestation of his objective of building up a model of the Indian nation of his dream. He was horrified when the Indian leaders agreed to discuss the 1944—Wevell offer which visualised partition of India. He instantly went over to the Azad Hind Radio to warn the Indian leaders, saying 'If India is divided she will be ruined politically, economically and socially. Our divine motherland shall not be cut'.

About his concept of polity that he wanted free India to adopt, Bose considered unlike Nehru, that 'the Mid-Victorian type of parliamentary system was unsuited to India'. He preferred a State with strong central power but with decentralised authority at the bottom, built on the 'age-old system of Indian Panch'. This State, he wanted to 'work as an organ or as the servant of the masses, and not of a few rich individuals', and as 'a system to put through economic reforms on socialist basis in the best possible way'.˙

The Role of Propaganda

On his sojourns abroad, Bose had fully realised the value of propaganda. He discussed it in his letter (in 1922) from Cambridge to C.R. Das, who wanted to organise an Asiatic League for that purpose."

In his article in 1935, Bose pleaded for the propaganda activities. "History teaches us", Bose wrote, "that for enslaved and suppressed nations—especially for those that eschew the path of violence—the sympathy of the civilised world is absolutely necessary and in order to win that sympathy, propaganda has to be undertaken."

Bose had even outlined the following programme, which is like a blueprint for foreign publicity:

"1. Indians should attend every International Congress.

2. Articles and books should be published in the different languages of Europe and America.

3. Well-equipped libraries should be established in important centres in foreign countries.

4. Prominent Indian scholars, representing different aspects of Indian culture, should travel and lecture abroad. Foreign scholars should be invited to India.

5. In every country mixed societies of Indians and the

nationals of that country should be organized for developing close cultural relations with India. Corresponding societies should be established in India.

6. Mixed chambers should be organized in every foreign capital, with corresponding bodies in India.

7. Regular assistance should be given to organizations which are already active in this field, such as the International Committee for India in Geneva".

About Indian propaganda abroad, he said, "This propaganda must be both positive and negative. On the negative side we must refute the lies that are told about India consciously or unconsciously by the agents of Great Britain throughout the world. On the positive side we must bring to the notice of the world the rich culture of India in all its aspects as well as India's manifold grievances."

He regretted the failure of the Congress in not realising the value of international propaganda. In this respect he admired the British first and the Russians next. "A British is a born propagandist", he wrote, "and to him propaganda is more powerful than howitzers. There is one other country..... and that is Russia." "Now England dislikes", Bose continued, "Russia and even afraid of her, for having discovered the secret of propaganda."

Above all, Bose was a man chosen by destiny to fulfil his pre-ordained nationalistic mission in life.

15

Accelerator of India's Freedom

History has, time and again, dealt unfairly with her heroes and has let man decide the difference between posterity and oblivion. Subhas Chandra Bose is one such casualty, although it is only now that he is receiving his rightful place among the galaxy of our freedom fighters and national leaders. All too often Bose has been dismissed by many as a hot-headed idealist who tried to employ far-fetched means to liberate his motherland. During the critical years of the freedom struggle (1941-45), virtually a parallel struggle was going on to achieve the same goal—within the country by the wedded-to-compromise Congress under the leadership of Gandhi and outside enslaved India's frontiers by Bose, who believed in fighting the enemy with power not passivity.

It was Bose, who, by propagating India's freedom in Europe, alerted the world to the real scenario in India and touched a responsive, hitherto dormant, chord in other countries who were reeling under the horrors of imperialism.

Finally, it was Bose and his brave band of men and women of the I.N.A. who actually did put the pressure on the British (the Naval Mutiny in British India) and speeded up the independence of the country.

The Naval Mutiny

Bose's presence in South-East Asia stirred a nationalist movement among the expatriate Indians, who were caught between two imperialistic forces—Britain and Japan. When news reached India that Netaji's I.N.A. was marching towards Delhi, the nation was electrified as never before. Huge country-wide demonstrations were held in its support.

The nationalistic fervour was infectious and it provided a spark to other long-simmering sentiments against the British. Chief among which was the Naval Mutiny.

During the Second World War, the Royal Indian Navy expanded and went from strength to strength, to 27,650, sailors and 2,700 officers. The sailors were crowded into demobilisation centres with virtually no activities to keep them busy. Resentment was growing steadily. The rate of demobilisation, undertaken to bring down the interim strength to 11,000, was extremely slow—2,000 per month. The atmosphere in Bombay at that time was vibrant with fiery revolutionaries such as Aruna Asaf Ali and Ram Manohar Lohia. It almost seemed as though India was on the threshold of her freedom. The trial of the I.N.A. men at the historic Red Fort had fired the imagination of the people. The Royal Indian Navy at the time was one of the last citadels of the British. The discontent began in small ways before burgeoning into a full-fledged mutiny. Anti-British posters started appearing on 'Talwar' Commander King, known for his racial arrogance was sent to suppress any show of rebellion. In order to discipline the sailors, he even forced a praying sailor to drop the Holy Quran, and stand up. This inflamed the lower deck and the mutiny spread rapidly to the other ships anchored in the harbour. In a splendid display of secular unity and foresight, the mutineers used the flags of the Congress, the Muslim League and the Communists.

The strike soon spread to military units outside Bombay. Between February 21 and 23, Bombay was a picture of national solidarity. Business establishments closed their shutters and 3,00,000 mill-hands joined ranks with the strikers. The police swung into action and police firings killed 217 and wounded 2,000 more. On 23 February, the strikers surrendered but not before impressing on the British a very significant point. The British would no longer receive blind loyalty from the native troops. The Indian freedom movement leaders realised the importance of the defence forces as one of the critical negotiation factors in achieving India's independence.

The Naval Mutiny very definitely indicated clearly the writing on the wall. The British government had no choice but to realize that Indians could not and would not be subjugated any longer. The transfer of power had to be accelerated.

Netaji ranks as a leader on par with Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru and his war-time contribution is widely regarded as the determining factor in India's final liberation from foreign rule.

A prodigious child of Indian Renaissance, Netaji grew up in the midst of far-reaching social and political changes that transformed the face of India and Asia during the first half of this century. Since his early youth Bose identified himself completely and unreservedly with the fate of his country. His experiences are a true mirror of the evolutionary and revolutionary changes in Indian society during this period. The spectacular and the rather controversial activities of his later years became easier to understand against the background of his origin, the fundamentals of his faith and idealism and the evolution of his personality through a life of relentless struggle.

Netaji's Contribution

Like some other well-known freedom fighters and national revolutionaries. Netaji ultimately reached a position when he could no longer achieve his objective with the means and methods available inside the country. His daring and adventurous journey out of India in January 1941 to Kabul, then Moscow and finally Berlin in April 1941 is an example of his desire to leave no stone unturned to help India throw off the shackles of British slavery. It was only logical that as a militant national revolutionary he should seek the help of the opponents of Britain in the final struggle against Britain and resort to means other than merely political, viz. agitation, negotiations and civil resistance.

The history of the last hundred years is replete with several instances of similar acts. Garibaldi worked for the freedom of Italy from Austria. Sun Yat Sen operated from Japan to free China from the yoke of imperial rule. Eamon de Valera for a time conducted Ireland's fight for freedom from abroad and took American aid for the purpose. Masaryk campaigned in Britain for the establishment of the independent state of Czechoslovakia. And Subhas Chandra Bose carried on his struggle against British rule in India from Europe and East Asia with the assistance of the then enemies of the British Empire, viz., Germany, Italy and Japan.

Netaji's I.N.A. played a very decisive role in the final phase of India's struggle for freedom as has observed the English writer Alastair Lamb:

> The agitation against their trial when the war was over, together with the 1946 mutiny in the Indian Navy, seemed to suggest that the British could not rely much longer on the Indian forces to keep India under British rule. This realisation, more than anything else, probably enabled British minds to accept the inevitability of Indian independence.
>
> The British, it seemed, gave in only when by so doing they gave themselves more security than they would have obtained had they continued to resist.

Yet another British commentary on Netaji's role in the achievement of Indian freedom has been given by Michael Edwardes, a noted historian, in his work *The Last Years of British India*:

> Only one outstanding personality took a different and violent path, and, in a sense, India owes more to him than to any other man—even though he seemed to be a failure.

Surprisingly, German, French and Italian literature do not contain much writings on Netaji. A beginning however has been made in Eastern Europe. In the book *Tiger und Schakal* by Reimund Sehnabel, published in 1958, a historical assessment of Netaji has been attempted. The author, after a careful examination of reams of documentary material, comes to this conclusion about Netaji's unsuccessful struggle for India's independence.

One can proceed on the assumption that Bose, of whom prominent fighters for Indian freedom have spoken in words of the highest recognition as a patriot, did not act out of opportunism. The assumption is also justified that he viewed the Nazi ideology sceptically and was no stooge of Hitler or Mussolini. Bose believed in functioning in accordance with political realism.

Sehnabel also cites from *Weltgeschichte* issued in 1967 in Berlin by the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (Volume 9, p. 137).

where Netaji, together with Jawaharlal Nehru, is given the credit for the manifestation of a new impulse in the national emancipation movement, the concrete expression of which was the creation of a left wing of the National Congress.

Netaji's war-time struggle in East Asia had a direct historical relationship with subsequent developments in all the countries of South Asia.

Netaji's political ideas were based on and shaped by a clear recognition of the common interests of the broad masses of his country, without letting the distinctions and divisions created by imperialism and other vested interests. He would certainly have fought tooth and nail the partition of India on religious basis as Britain's price for India's independence. Had fate allowed him to live longer, he may well have nipped in the bud communal and regional divisions threatening the unification of India and the emergence of a united national Indian state. Nor would he have accepted the British forms of state organization as models, as was done in India, more or less, after independence. He would have promoted, with his usual courage and zeal, planned socialist reconstruction of the country.

The news of the death of Subhas Bose in a plane crash sent shock waves throughout India and the rest of the world. Barely had the shock subsided than controversial reports sprang up about him being alive.

Investigations as to his ultimate fate at the end of the war in the Far East were carried out both at the official level by the Government of India as well as by many individuals over a period of two decades. The findings of the first Netaji Enquiry Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1956 said that Bose died of injuries sustained in an air-crash in Taipei, Formosa, on 18 August, 1945. Contrary to this is the widespread belief amongst the Indian people that their beloved Netaji is still alive. There is no real evidence to support such a belief. When his war-time ally Japan and the Indian National Army met with crushing defeat, Bose took it in his customary stride. In his last radio speech to the Indian people, he frankly revealed the truth about the disaster that had overtaken his Army. At the same time, however, he spoke of the future and hinted at forging an alliance with a potential enemy of Anglo-American Imperialism, the Soviet Union, to continue the struggle for Indian freedom. As a true revolutionary his faith in the final victory of his cause remained unshaken disasters notwithstanding. And though he stood among the ruins of his dream, he was thinking and planning in terms of a different road to Delhi. Bose never once regarded the collapse of the Tripartite powers—his war-time allies—as a stumbling block to the cause that he was fighting for, namely, Indian freedom. With an ease born of a clear mind, he separated the future of the Indian freedom movement from the calamities of his allies in the war. He remained, a true national revolutionary who now sought new allies and new ways of realising his objective.

During his campaign in East Asia, Bose was battling against time as well: His plan of an Indian Revolution should have ideally been launched in 1942. He tried his level best to come over to the East in 1942. The Indian National Congress, led by Gandhi also adopted a militant anti-British attitude in 1942. With Japanese forces knocking at the gates of India and a most favourable internal situation, a military assault from Burma under Bose's dynamic leadership could not have come at a more opportune moment and could well have tipped the scales in India's favour. The former British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan wrote in his Memoirs (p. 285): "...specially at this particular moment the whole of the Indian sub-continent had remained totally defenceless and its doors open to the enemy. The British rulers in India also knew that in 1942 the Japanese Navy could, without any opposition, go in and out through the Bay of Bengal, and India for the first time since its domination by the British, was threatened by an invasion by an Asian power and the defences that the British had build up in India were not equal to the danger."

In 1942, therefore, Bose had hoped that his aims would be fulfilled. The main block was Hitler and the group around him who determined the policies of the German Government. When Bose escaped from India and arrived in Germany, it seemed that Germany was gearing up to attack Britain after subduing the rest of Europe.

Naturally then, Bose expected that Hitler, at that particular moment and as the responsible head of the most powerful German

State in history would, in spite less of his absurd racial theories and vendetta against Bolshevism, he inclined to side with his aims and objectives. However, Bose was bitterly disappointed with Hitler, who oblivious of the great danger of three world powers combining against him was still ranting and raving in terms of "a world struggle against Zionism and Boleshevism".

Bose lost all hope of gaining any advantage from the ongoing war in Europe when Hitler launched his offensive against Soviet Russia. Bose's original plan of entering India through the north-west frontier at the head of a liberation army could only materialise if there was peace between Germany and Soviet Union. Bose's last hope lay in a separate peace treaty between Germany and Soviet Union. But that was not to be. Since early 1942 Bose was trying to move German authorities to help him go over to the Far East where the Japanese had already reached the frontiers of India.

Hope sprang in him anew when he heard of a statement made by the Soviet Government to the Japanese Government regarding the future of his continent. In the Japanese Embassy in Berlin, the Japanese Counsellor Kawahara told him that the Soviet Government had made a declaration to the Japanese Government that irrespective of the outcome of the war—according to the Soviet Government. South-East Asia would never return to the position it had prior to 1942.

This bit of information greatly encouraged Bose who assumed that the Soviet Union was basically opposed to the capitalist-imperialist war aims of the Anglo-American powers. Bose was also hopeful that the powers occupying the vast land masses of Europe and Asia would sooner or later join hands against the Anglo-Americans and that India would belong to such a Euro-Asian Comity of Nations, a new inter-continental bloc, extending from Tokyo to the Atlantic Ocean via Moscow and Berlin.

From early 1941 to the beginning of 1945, relations between Japan and the Soviet Union were on even keel and diplomatic contacts between them ran along normal channels. This suited Bose's war-time plans for his country's freedom.

When a peace treaty failed to materialise between Soviet Russia and Germany, it spelled doom for Japan. Against the backdrop of such a world political situation in August 1945, Bose decided to proceed to Manchuria, then occupied by Soviet Union, to continue his struggle. That the Japanese agreed to place an aeroplane at his disposal for this purpose showed that they were true to the new 'Asian consciousness' which Bose discovered in Japan on his arrival there in 1943. Further corroborated by the fact that the Japanese tacitly agreed to let the Head of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind make contacts with the Soviets.

Tearful Homage to Subhas

"Subhas Chandra Bose has passed into history but he has been recognised as the pioneer of the process of decolonisation and the emergence of many new national states have been the major development in human affairs—particularly in Asia, Africa and South America.

My relations with Subhas Bose were always of the purest and best I always knew his capacity for sacrifice, but full knowledge of his resourcefulness, soldiership, and organising ability came to me only after his escape from India."

M. K. Gandhi

"While the news of the death of Subhas has shocked me, it has also given relief that in the struggle for the cause of India's independence, he has given his life and has escaped all pending troubles. He was not only brave but had deep love for freedom and whatever he did, he did it for the Independence of India...Nobody can doubt his sincerity that he has been struggling for the whole of his life for the Independence of India in his own way."

Jawaharlal Nehru

"The tragic end of an eventful life of one of the bravest and foremost patriots of India, Subhas Chandra Bose, will be mourn-deeply by all throughout the country. There was nothing that he did not sacrifice in the struggle for freedom."

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

"From his youthful days he was passionately devoted to the cause of Indian freedom and pursued his aim with uncommon zeal and single mindedness... His patriotism was beyond doubt."

Maulana Azad

"Subhas is dead-the last tragic scene has been enacted in the many coloured drama of his strange and crowded life. Two millions of men and women who loved him, his death is more than a great national loss it is a deep personal bereavement.

His proud importunate and violent spirit was flaming sword for ever unsheathed in defence of the land he worshipped with such surpassing devotion. His death and his life are both a dedication to the ideal of liberty. A greater love hath not more than this, that he lay down his life for his country and his people."

Sarojini Naidu

"I recall to my mind his spirit of selflessness, patriotism, discipline and dedication. In the many fields of nationbuilding activity that we worked together, I found him to be a real leader of men who breathed every minute the political freedom and economic salvation of the people. In the twenties in the organization of the working classes into trade unions, we were together whether it was organizing the labour in the mines, steel industry or the railways."

V.V. Giri

Among the galaxy of national leaders who have put India on the world map Netaji Bose can legitimately claim a pride of place. He played a pivotal role during a very crucial phase of India's historic march towards national liberation. The emergence of I.N.A. may be reckoned as a significant landmark in the annals of India's struggle for Independence and it was indeed a part of the Freedom Movement. Subhas could not brook any delay and he felt that action from all directions would help the Nationalist Movement to gather momentum. By creating a rather demoralizing influence on British arms, the INA produced a salutary impact on the tempo of our freedom fight. The British felt that once the loyalty of the Armies was disturbed, the British Raj, which depended on military strength, would give way. Netaji's parting message was that

Germany might be defeated, Japan might be vanquished but India would remain invincible. He firmly believed that there was no defeat for India and he was determined to continue the fight for freedom as long as any life was left in him.

Netaji's life is, thus, an inspiring saga of supreme sacrifice, a dream, a romance and something more. He coined the magical words "Jai Hind" and by sheer force of unalloyed patriotism, indefatigable energy, sterling character, unquenchable ardour for emancipating Mother India from alien bondage, magic power of speech, magnetic personality, resourcefulness and cool courage he carved out for himself an abiding niche in the annals of modern India.

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